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SIR JOHN CONSTANTINE.<sup>1</sup>

*Memoirs of his adventures at home and abroad, and particularly in the Island of Corsica; beginning with the year 1756; written by his son Prosper Palcoogus, otherwise Constantine; and edited by Q.*

CHAPTER V.

THE SILENT MEN.

Seamen, seamen, whence come ye?  
*Pardonnez moy, je vous en prie.—Old Song.*

A MONK he was too. A second and third look over my shoulder left me no doubt of it. He gravely handed us a rope as we overtook the ketch and ran alongside, and as gravely bowed when I leapt upon deck; but he gave us no other welcome.

His russet gown reached almost to his feet, which were bare; and he stood amid the strangest litter of a deck-cargo, consisting mainly—or so at first glance it seemed to me—of pot-plants and rude agricultural implements: spades, flails, forks, mattocks, picks, hoes, dibbles, rakes, lashed in bundles; sieves, buckets, kegs, bins, milk-pails, seed-hods, troughs, mangers, a wired dovecote, and a score of hen-coops filled with poultry. Forward of the mainmast stood a cart with shafts, upright and lashed to the mast, that the headsails might work clear. The space between the masts was occupied by enormous open hatchways through which came the lowing of oxen, and through these, peering down into the hold, I saw the backs of cattle and horses moving in its gloom, and the bodies of men stretched in the straw at their feet.

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So much of the *Gauntlet's* hugger-mugger I managed to discern before Captain Pomery left the helm and hurried forward to give us welcome on board.

'Mornin', Squire Prosper! Mornin', Billy! You know *me*, sir—Cap'n Jo Pomery—which is short for Job, and 'tis the luckiest chance, sir, you hailed me, for you'm nearabouts the first man I wanted to see. Faith, now, and I wonder how your father (God bless him) will take it?'

'Why, what's the matter?' asked I, with a glance at the monk, who had drawn back a pace and stood, still silent, fingering his rosary.

'The matter? Good Lord! isn't *this* matter enough?' Captain Jo waved an arm to include all the deck-cargo. 'See them pot-plants, there, and what they'm teeled<sup>1</sup> in?'

'Drinking-troughs?' said I. 'Or . . . is it coffins?'

'Coffins it is. I'd feel easier in mind if you could tell me what your father (God bless him) will say to it.'

'But what has all this to do with my father?' I demanded, and, seeking Billy's eyes, found them as frankly full of amaze as my own.

'Not but what,' continued Captain Jo, 'they've behaved well, though dog-sick to a man from the time we left port. Look at 'em!'—he caught me by the arm and drawing me to the hatchway pointed down to the hold. 'A round score and eight, and all well paid for as passengers; but for the return journey I won't answer. It depends on your father, and that'—with a jerk of his thumb towards the tall monk—'I stipulated when I shipped 'em. "Never you mind," was the answer I got; "take 'em to England to Sir John Constantine." And here they be!'

'But who on earth are they?' I cried, staring down into the gloom, where presently I made out that the men stretched in the straw at the horses' feet were monks all, and habited like the monk on the deck behind me. To him next I turned, to find his eyes, which were dark and quick, searching me curiously; and as I turned he made a step forward, put out a hand as if to touch me on the shirt-sleeve, and anon drew it back timidly, yet still continued to regard me.

'You are a son, signor, of Sir John Constantine?' he asked, in soft Italian.

'I am his only son, sir,' I answered him in the same language.

<sup>1</sup> Tilled.

'Ah! You speak my tongue?' A gleam of joy passed over his grave features. 'And you are his son? So—I should have guessed it at once, for you bear great likeness to him.'

'You know my father, sir?'

'Years ago.' His hands, which he used expressively, seemed to grope in a far past. 'I come to him also from one who knew him years ago.'

'Upon what business, sir? if I am allowed to ask.'

'I bring a message.' He pointed to his breast.

'You bring a tolerably full one, then,' said I, glancing first at the disorder on deck and from that down to the recumbent figures in the hold.

'I speak for them,' he went on, having followed the glance. 'It is most necessary that they keep silence; but I speak for all.'

'Then, sir, as it seems to me, you have much to say.'

'No,' he answered slowly; 'very little, I think; very little, as you will see.'

Here Captain Jo interrupted us. He had stepped back to steady the wheel, but I fancy that the word *silenzio* must have reached him, and that, small Italian though he knew, with this particular word the voyage had made him bitterly acquainted.

'Dumb!' he shouted. 'Dumb as gutted haddocks!'

'Dumb?' I echoed, while the two seamen forward heard and laughed.

'It is their vow,' said the monk gravely, and seemed on the point to say more.

But at this moment Captain Pomery sang out 'Gybe-o!' At the warning we ducked our heads together as the boom swung over and the *Gauntlet*, heeling gently for a moment, rounded the river-bend in view of the great house of Constantine, set high and gazing over the folded woods. A house more magnificently placed, with forest, park and great stone terraces rising in successive tiers from the water's edge, I do not believe our England in those days could show; and it deserved its site, being amply classical in design, with a façade that, discarding mere ornament, expressed its proportion and symmetry in bold straight lines, prolonged by the terraces on which tall rows of pointed yews stood sentinel. Right English though it was, it bore (as my father used to say of our best English poetry) the stamp of great Italian descent, and I saw the monk give a start as he lifted his eyes to it.

'We have not these creeks of water in Italy,' said he, 'nor these woods, nor these green lawns; and yet, if those trees, aloft there, were but cypresses——' He broke off. 'Our voyage has a good ending,' he added, half to himself.

The *Gauntlet* being in ballast and the tide high, Captain Pomery found plenty of water in the winding channel, every curve of which he knew to a hair, and steered for at its due moment, winking cheerfully at Billy and me, who stood ready to correct his pilotage. He had taken in his mainsail, and carried steerage way with mizzen and jib only; and thus, for 'close upon a mile, we rode up on the tide, scaring the herons and curlews before us, until drawing within sight of a grass-grown quay he let run down his remaining canvas and laid the ketch alongside, so gently that one of the seamen, who had cast a stout fender overside, stepped ashore, and with a slow pull on her main rigging checked and brought her to a standstill.

'*Aut Lacedaemonium Tarentum,*' said the monk at my shoulder quietly; and, as I stared at him, 'Ah, to be sure, this is your Tarentum, is it not? Yet the words came to me for the sound's sake only and their falling close. Our voyage has even such a gentle ending.'

'I had best run on,' I suggested, 'and warn my father of your coming.'

'It is not necessary.'

'But still,' I urged, 'they can be preparing breakfast for you, up at the house, while you and your friends are making ready to come ashore.'

'We have broken our fast,' he answered; 'and we are quite ready, if you will be so good as to guide us.'

He stepped to the hatchways and called down, announcing simply that the voyage was ended; and in the dusk there I saw monk after monk upheave himself from the straw and come clambering up the ladder; tall monks and short, old monks and young and middle-aged, lean monks and thickset—but the most of them cadaverous, and all of them yellow with sea-sickness; twenty-eight monks, all barefoot, all tolerably dirty, and all blinking in the fresh sunshine. When they were gathered, at a sign from one of them—by dress not distinguishable from his fellows—all knelt and gave silent thanks for the voyage accomplished.

I could see that Billy Priske was frightened: for arising they rolled their eyes about them like wild animals turned loose in an un-



familiar country, and the whites of their eyes were yellow (so to speak) with seafaring, and their pupils glassy with fever and from the sea's glare. But the monk their spokesman touched my arm and motioned me to lead; and, when I obeyed, one by one the whole troop fell into line and followed at his heels.

Thus we went—I leading, with him and the rest in single file after me—up by the footpath through the woods, and forth into sunshine again upon the green dewy bracken of the deer-park. Here my companion spoke for the first time since disembarking.

‘Your father, sir,’ said he, looking about him and seeming to sniff the morning air, ‘must be a very rich signor.’

‘On the contrary,’ I answered, ‘I have some reason to believe him a poor man.’

He stared down for a moment at his bare feet, wet with the grasses. ‘Ah? Well, it will make no difference,’ he said; and we resumed our way.

As we climbed the last slope under the terraces of the house, I caught sight of my father leaning by a balustrade high above us, at the head of a double flight of broad stone steps, and splicing the top joint of a trout-rod he had broken the day before. He must have caught sight of us almost at the moment when we emerged from the woods.

He showed no surprise at all. Only as I led my guests up the steps he set down his work and, raising a hand, bent to them in a very courteous welcome.

‘Good morning, lad! And good morning to those you bring, whencesoever they come.’

‘They come, sir,’ I answered, ‘in Jo Pomery’s ketch *Gauntlet*; I believe from Italy; and I believe with a message for you.’

My father lifted his gaze from me and bent it on the spokesman at my elbow. His eyebrows lifted with surprise and sudden pleasure.

‘Hey?’ he exclaimed. ‘Is it my old friend——’

But the other, before his name could be uttered, lifted a hand. ‘My name is the Brother Basilio now, Sir John: no other am I permitted to remember. The peace of God be with you and upon your house!’

‘And with you, Brother Basilio, since you will have it so: and with all your company! You bear a message for me? But first you must break your fast.’ He turned to lead the way to the house.

'We have eaten already, Sir John. As soon as your leisure serves, we would deliver our message.'

My father called to Billy Priske—who hung in the rear of the monks—bidding him fetch my uncle Gervase in from the stables to the State Room, and so, without another word, motioned to his visitors to follow. To this day I can hear the shuffle of their bare feet on the steps and slabs of the terrace as they hurried after him to keep up with his long strides.

In the great entrance-hall he paused to lift a bunch of rusty keys off their hook, and, choosing the largest, unlocked the door of the State Room. The lock had been kept well oiled, for Billy Priske entered it twice daily; in the morning, to open a window or two, and at sunset, to close them. But it is a fact that I had not crossed its threshold a score of times in my life, though I ran by it, maybe, as many times a day; nor (as I believe) had my father entered it for years. Yet it was the noblest room in the house, in length seventy-five feet, panelled high in dark oak and cedar and adorned around each panel with carvings of Grinling Gibbons—festoons and crowns and cherub-faces and intricate baskets of flowers. Each panel held a portrait, and over every panel, in faded gilt against the morning sun, shone an imperial crown. The windows were draped with hangings of rotten velvet. At the far end on a dais stood a porphyry table, and behind it, facing down the room, a single chair, or throne, also of porphyry and rudely carved. For the rest the room held nothing but dust—dust so thick that our visitors' naked feet left imprints upon it as they huddled after their leader to the dais, where my father took his seat, after beckoning me forward to stand on his right.

But of all bewildered faces there was never a blanker, I believe, since the world began than my uncle Gervase's; who now appeared in the doorway, a bucket in his hand, straight from the stables where he had been giving my father's roan horse a drench. Billy's summons must have hurried him, for he had not even waited to turn down his shirt-sleeves: but as plainly it had given him no sort of notion why he was wanted and in the State Room. I guessed indeed that on his way he had caught up the bucket supposing that the house was afire. At sight of the monks he set it down slowly, gently, staring at them the while, and seemed in act of inverting it to sit upon, when my father addressed him from the dais over the shaven heads of the audience.

'Brother, I am sorry to have disturbed you: but here is a

business in which I may need your counsel. Will it please you to step this way ? These guests of ours, I should first explain, have arrived from over seas.'

My uncle came forward, still like a man in a dream, mounted the dais on my father's left and, turning, surveyed the visitors in front.

'Eh ? To be sure, to be sure,' he murmured. 'Broomsticks ?'

'Their spokesman here, who gives his name as the Brother Basilio, bears a message for me ; and since he presents it in form with a whole legation at his back, I think it due to treat him with equal ceremony. Do you agree ?'

'If you ask me,' my uncle answered after a pause full of thought, 'they would prefer to start, maybe, with a wash and a breakfast. By good luck, Billy tells me, the trammel has made a good haul. As for basins, brother, our stock will not serve all these gentlemen : but if the rest will take the will for the deed and use the pump I'll go round meanwhile and see how the hens have been laying.'

'You are the most practical of men, brother ; but my offer of breakfast has already been declined. Shall we hear what Dom Basilio has to say ?'

'I have nothing to say, Sir John,' put in Brother Basilio, advancing, 'but to give you this letter and await your answer.'

He drew a folded paper from his tunic and handed it to my father, who rose to receive it, turned it over, and glanced at the superscription. I saw a red flush creep slowly up to his temples and fade, leaving his face extraordinarily pale. A moment later, in face of his audience, he lifted the paper to his lips, kissed it reverently, and broke the seal.

Again I saw the flush mount to his temples as he read the letter through slowly and in silence. Then after a long pause he handed it to me ; and I took it wondering, for his eyes were dim and yet bright with a noble joy.

The letter (turned into English) ran thus :

To Sir John Constantine, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Star,  
at his house of Constantine in Cornwall, England.

My Friend,—The bearer of this and his company have been driven by the Genoese from their monastery of San Giorgio on my estate of Casalabriva above the Taravo valley, the same where you will remember our treading the vintage together to the freedom of Corsica. But the Genoese have cut down my vines long since, and now they have fired the roof over these my tenants and driven them into the *macchia*, whence they send message to me to deliver them. Indeed, friend, I have much ado to protect myself in these days : but by good fortune I have heard of an English vessel homeward bound which will serve

them if they can reach the coast, when numbers of the faithful will send them off with good provision. Afterwards, what will happen? To England the ship is bound, and in England I know you only. Remembering your great heart I call on it for what help you can render to these holy men. *Addio*, friend. You are remembered in my constant prayers to Christ, the Virgin, and all the Saints.

EMILIA.

At a sign from my father—who had sunk back in his chair and sat gripping its arms—I passed on this epistle to my uncle Gervase, who read it and ran his hand through his hair.

‘Dear me!’ said he, running his eye over the attentive monks, ‘this lady, whoever she may be——’

‘She is a crowned queen, brother Gervase,’ my father interrupted; ‘and moreover she is the noblest woman in the world.’

‘As to that, brother,’ returned my uncle, ‘I am saying nothing. But speaking of what I know, I say she can be but poorly conversant with your worldly affairs.’

My father half-lifted himself from his seat. ‘And is that how you take it?’ he demanded sharply. ‘Is that all you read in the letter? Brother, I tell you again, this lady is a queen. What should a queen know of my degree of poverty?’

‘Nevertheless——’ began my uncle.

But my father cut him short again. ‘I had hoped,’ said he reproachfully, ‘you would have been prompt to recognise her noble confidence. Mark you how, no question put, she honours me. “Do this, for my sake”—Who but the greatest in this world can appeal thus simply?’

‘None, maybe,’ my uncle replied; ‘as none but the well-to-do can answer with a like ease.’

‘You come near to anger me, brother; but I remember that you never knew her. Is not this house large? Are not four-fifths of my rooms lying at this moment untenanted? Very well: for so long as it pleases them, since she claims it, these holy men shall be our guests. No more of this,’ my father commanded peremptorily, and added with all the gravity in the world, ‘You should thank her consideration rather, that she sends us visitors so frugal, since poverty degrades us to these economies. But there is one thing puzzles me,’ he went on, taking the letter again from my uncle and fastening his gaze on the Brother Basilio. ‘She says she has much ado to protect herself.’

‘Indeed, Sir John,’ answered Brother Basilio, ‘I fear the queen, our late liege-lady, writes somewhat less than the truth. She wrote to you from a poor lodging hard by Bastia, having ventured

back to Corsica out of Tuscany on business of her own ; and on the eve of sailing we heard that she had been taken prisoner by the Genoese.'

'What !' My father rose, clutching the arms of his chair. Of stone they were, like the chair itself, and well morticed : but his great grip wrenched them out of their mortices and they crashed on the daïs. 'What ! You left her a prisoner of the Genoese !' He gazed around them in a wrath that slowly grew cold, freezing into contempt. 'Go, sirs ; since she commands it, room shall be found for you all. My house for the while is yours. But go from me now.'

## CHAPTER VI.

### HOW MY FATHER OUT OF NOTHING BUILT AN ARMY, AND IN FIVE MINUTES PLANNED AN INVASION.

Walled Townes, stored Arcenalls and Armouries, Goodly Races of Horse, Chariots of Warre, Elephants, Ordnance, Artillery, and the like : All this is but a Sheep in a Lion's Skin, except the Breed and disposition be stout and warlike. Nay, Number it selfe in Armies importeth not much where the People is of weake courage : For (as *Virgil* saith) It never troubles a Wolfe, how many the sheepe be.—BACON.

FOR the rest of the day my father shut himself in his room, while my uncle spent the most of it seated on the brewhouse steps in a shaded corner of the back court, through which the monks brought in their furniture and returned to the ship for more. The bundles they carried were prodigious, and all the morning they worked without halt or rest, ascending and descending the hill in single file and always at equal distances one behind another. Watching from the terrace down the slope of the park as they came and went, you might have taken them for a company of ants moving camp. But my uncle never wholly recovered from the shock of their first freight, to see man by man cross the court with a stout coffin on his back and above each coffin a pack of straw : nor was he content with Fra Basilio's explanation that the brethren slept in these coffins by rule and saved the expense of beds.

'For my part,' said my uncle, 'considering the numbers that manage it, I should have thought death no such dexterity as to need practice.'

'Yet bethink you, sir, of St. Paul's words. "I protest," said he, "I die daily."'

'Why yes, sir, and so do we all,' agreed my uncle, and fell silent, on the very point, as it seemed, of continuing the argument. 'I did not choose to be discourteous, lad,' he explained to me later: 'but I had a mind to tell him that we do daily a score of things we don't brag about—of which I might have added that washing is one: and I believe 'twould have been news to him.'

I had never known my uncle in so rough a temper. Poor man! I believe that all the time he sat there on the brewhouse steps, he was calculating woefully the cost of these visitors; and it hurt him the worse because he had a native disposition to be hospitable.

'But who is this lady that signs herself Emilia?' I asked.

'A crowned queen, lad, and the noblest lady in the world—you heard your father say it. This evening he may choose to tell us some further particulars.'

'Why this evening?' I asked, and then suddenly remembered that to-day was the 15th of July and St. Swithin's feast; that my father would not fail to drink wine after dinner in the little temple below the deer-park; and that he had promised to admit me to-night to make the fourth in St. Swithin's brotherhood.

He appeared at dinner time, punctual and dressed with more than his usual care (I noted that he wore his finest lace ruffles); and before going in to dinner we were joined by the Vicar, much perturbed—as his manner showed—by the news of a sudden descent of papists upon his parish. Indeed the good man so bubbled with it that we had scarcely taken our seats before the stream of questions overflowed. 'Who were these men?' 'How many?' 'Whence had they come, and why?' &c.

I glanced at my father in some anxiety for his temper. But he laughed and carved the salmon composedly. He had a deep and tolerant affection for Mr. Grylls. 'Where shall I begin?' said he. 'They are, I believe, between twenty and thirty in number, though I took no care to count; and they belong to the Trappistine Order, to which I have ever been attracted; first, because I count it admirable to renounce all for a faith, however frantic, and secondly for the memory of Bouthillier de Rancé, who a hundred years ago revived the order after five hundred years of desuetude.'

'And who was he?' inquired the Vicar.

'He was a young rake in Paris, tonsured for the sake of the family benefices, who had for mistress no less a lady than the Duchess de Rohan-Montbazon. One day, returning from the country after a week's absence and letting himself into the house by a private key,

he rushed upstairs in a lover's haste, burst open the door, and found himself in a chamber hung with black and lit with many candles. His mistress had died, the day before, of a putrid fever. But—worse than this and most horrible—the servants had ordered the coffin in haste; and, when delivered, it was found to be too short. Upon which, to have done with her, in their terror of infection, they had lopped off the head, which lay pitiably dissevered from the trunk. For three years after the young man travelled as one mad, but at length found solace in his neglected abbacy of Soligny-la-Trappe, and in reviving its extreme Cistercian rigours.'

'I had supposed the Trappists to be a French order in origin, and confined to France,' said the Vicar.

'They have offshoots: of which I knew but one in Italy, that settled some fifty years back in a monastery they call Buon-Solazzo, outside Florence, at the invitation of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. But I have been making question of our guests through Dom Basilio, their guest-master and abbot *de facto* (since their late abbot, an old man whom he calls Dom Polifilo, died of exposure on the mountains some three days before they embarked); and it appears that they belong to a second colony, which has made its home for these ten years at Casalabriva in Corsica, having arrived by invitation of the Queen Emilia of that island, and there abiding until the Genoese burned the roof over their heads.'

The Vicar sipped his wine.

'You have considered,' he asked, 'the peril of introducing so many papists into our quiet parish?'

'I have not considered it for a moment,' answered my father cheerfully. 'Nor have I introduced them. But if you fear they'll convert—pervert—subvert—invert your parishioners and turn 'em into papists, I can reassure you. For in the first place thirty men, or thirty thousand, of whom only one can open his mouth, are, for proselytising, equal to one man and no more.'

'They can teach by their example if not by their precept,' urged the Vicar.

'Their example is to sleep in their coffins. My good sir, if you will not trust your English doctrine to its own truth, you might at least rely on the persuasiveness of its comfort. Nay, pardon me, my friend,' he went on, as the Vicar's either cheekbone showed a red flush, 'I did not mean to speak offensively; but Englishman as I am, in matters of religion my countrymen are ever a puzzle to me. At a great price you won your freedom from the Bishop of



Rome and his dictation. I admire the price and I love liberty; yet liberty has its drawbacks, as you have for a long while been discovering; of which the first is that every man with a maggot in his head can claim a like liberty with yourselves, quoting your own words in support of it. Let me remind you of that passage in which Rabelais—borrowing, I believe, from Lucian—brings the good Pantagruel and his fellow-voyagers to a port which he calls the Port of Lanterns. "Then (says he) upon a tall tower Pantagruel recognised the Lantern of La Rochelle, which gave us an excellent clear light. Also we saw the Lanterns of Pharos, of Nauplia, and of the Acropolis of Athens, sacred to Pallas," and so on; whence I draw the moral that coast-lights are good, yet, multiplied, they complicate navigation.'

'—and apply your moral by erecting yet another!'

'Fairly retorted. Yet how can you object without turning the sword of Liberty against herself? Have you never heard tell, by the way, of Captain Byng's midshipman?'

'Who was he?'

'I forget his name, but he started his first night aboard ship by kneeling down and saying his prayers, as his mother had taught him.'

'I commend the boy,' said my uncle.

'I also commend him; but the crowd of his fellow-midshipmen found it against the custom of the service and gave him the strap for it. This, however, raised him up a champion in one of the taller lads, who protested that their conduct was tyrannous: "and," said he very generously, "to-morrow night I too propose to say my prayers. If any one object, he may fight me." Thus, being a handy lad with his fists, he established the right of religious liberty on board. By and by one or two of the better disposed midshipmen followed his example: by degrees the custom spread along the lower deck, where the dispute had happened in full view of the whole ship's company, seamen and marines; and by the time she reached her port of Halifax she hadn't a man on board (outside the ward-room) but said his prayers regularly.'

'A notable Christian triumph,' was the Vicar's comment.

'Quite so. At Halifax,' pursued my father, 'Captain Byng took aboard out of hospital another small midshipman, who on his first night no sooner climbed into his hammock than the entire mess bundled him out of it. "We would have you to know, young man," said they, "that private devotion is the rule



on board our ship. It's down on your knees this minute or you get the strap."

'I leave you,' my father concluded, 'to draw the moral. For my part the tale teaches me that in any struggle for freedom the real danger begins with the moment of victory.'

Said my uncle Gervase after a pause, 'Then these Corsicans of yours, brother, stand as yet in no real danger, since the Genoese are yet harrying their island with fire and sword.'

'In no danger at all as regards their liberty,' answered my father, poising his knife for a first cut into the saddle of mutton, 'though in some danger, I fear me, as regards their queen. They have, however, taken the first and most important step by getting the news carried to me. The next is to raise an army; and the next after that, to suit the plan of invasion to our forces. Indeed,' wound up my father with another flourish of his carving-knife, 'I am in considerable doubt where to make a start.'

'I hold,' said my uncle, eyeing the saddle of mutton, 'that you save the gravy by beginning close alongside the chine.'

'I was thinking for my part that either Porto or Sagone would serve us best,' said my father meditatively.

Dinner over, the four of us strolled out abreast into the cool evening and down through the deer-park to the small Ionic temple, where Billy Priske had laid out fruit, wine, and glasses; and there, with no more ceremony than standing to drink my health, the three initiated me into the brotherhood of St. Swithin. It gave me a sudden sense of being grown a man, and this sense my father very promptly proceeded to strengthen.

'I had hoped,' said he, putting down his glass and seating himself, 'to delay Prosper's novitiate. I had designed, indeed, that after staying his full time at Oxford he should make the Grand Tour with me and prepare himself for his destiny by a leisured study of cities and men. But this morning's news has forced me to reshape my plans. Listen:

'In the early autumn of 1735, being then at the Court of Tuscany, I received sudden and secret orders to repair to Corte, the capital of Corsica, an island of which I knew nothing beyond what I had learnt in casual talk from the Count Domenico Rivarola, who then acted as its plenipotentiary at Florence. He was a man with whom I would willingly have taken counsel, but my orders from England expressly forbade it. Rivarola in fact was suspected—and justly as my story will show—of designs of his own

for the future of the island ; and although, as it will also show, we had done better to consult him—Walpole's injunctions were precise that I should by every means keep him in the dark.

‘The situation—to put it as briefly as I can—was this. For two hundred years or so the island had been ruled by the Republic of Genoa ; and, by common consent, atrociously. For generations the islanders had lived in chronic revolt, under chiefs against whom the Genoese—or, to speak more correctly, the Bank of Genoa—had not scrupled to apply every device, down to secret assassination. *Uno avolso non deficit alter* : the Corsicans never lacked a leader to replace the fallen : and in 1735 the succession was shared by two noble patriots, Giafferi and Hyacinth Paoli.

‘Under their attacks the Genoese were slowly but none the less certainly losing their hold on the island. Their plight was such that, although no one knew precisely what they would do, every one foresaw that, failing some heroic remedy, they must be driven into the sea, garrison after garrison, and lose Corsica altogether ; and of all speculations the most probable seemed that they would sell the island, with all its troubles, to France. Now for France to acquire so capital a *point d'appui* in the Mediterranean would obviously be no small inconvenience to England : and therefore our Ministers—who had hitherto regarded the struggles of the islanders with indifference—woke up to a sudden interest in Corsican affairs.

‘They had no excuse for interfering openly. But if the Corsicans would but take heart and choose themselves a king, that king could at a ripe moment be diplomatically acknowledged ; and any interference by France would at once become an act of violent usurpation. (For let me tell you, my friends—the sufferings of a people count as nothing in diplomacy against the least trivial act against a crown.) The nuisance was, the two Paolis, Giafferi and Hyacinth, had no notion whatever of making themselves kings ; nor would their devoted followers have tolerated it. Yet—as sometimes happens—there was a third man, of greater descent than they, to whom at a pinch the crown might be offered, and with a far more likely chance of the Corsicans' acquiescence. This was a Count Ugo Colonna, a middle-aged man, descended from the oldest nobility of the island, and head of his family, which might more properly be called a clan ; a patriot, in his way, too, though lacking the fire of the Paolis, to whom he had surrendered the leadership while remaining something of a figure-head. In short

my business was to confer with him at Corte, persuade the Corsican chiefs to offer him the crown, and persuade him to accept it.

‘I arrived then at the capital and found Count Ugo willing enough, though by no means eager, for the honour. He was in fact a mild-mannered gentleman of no great force of character, and frequently interrupted our conference to talk by choice of a bowel-complaint which obviously meant more to him than all the internal complications of Europe : and next to his bowel-complaint—but some way after—he prized his popularity, which ever seemed more important than his country’s welfare : or belike he confused the two. He was at great pains to impress me with the sacrifices he had made for Corsica—which in the past had been real enough : but he had come to regard them chiefly as matter for public speaking, or excuse for public bowing and lifting of the hat. You know the sort of man, I dare say. To pass that view of life, at his age, is the last test of greatness.

‘Still, the notion of being crowned King of Corsica tickled his vanity, and would have tickled it more had he begotten a son to succeed him. It opened new prospects of driving through crowds and bowing and lifting his hat : and he turned pardonably sulky when the two Paolis treated my proposals with suspicion. They had an immense respect for England as the leader of the free peoples : but they wanted to know why in Tuscany I had not taken their Count Rivarola into my confidence. In fact they were in communication with their plenipotentiary already, and half way towards another plan, of which very excusably they allowed me to guess nothing.

‘The upshot was that my interference threw Count Ugo into a pet with them. He only wanted them to press him ; was angry at not being pressed ; yet believed that they would repent in time. Meanwhile he persuaded me to ride back with him to one of his estates, a palace above the valley of the Taravo.

‘I know not why, but ever the vow of Jephthah comes to my mind as I remember how we rode up the valley to Count Ugo’s house in the hour before sunset. “And behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances, and she was his only child.” He had made no vow and was incapable, poor man, of keeping any so heroic ; and she came out with no timbrel or dance, but soberly enough in her sad-coloured dress of the people. Yet she came out while we rode a good mile off, and waited for us as we climbed the last slope, and she was his only child.

'How shall I tell you of her? She helped my purpose nothing, for at first she was vehemently opposed to her father's consenting to be king. Her politics she derived in part from the reading of Plutarch's Lives and in part from her own simplicity. They were childish, utterly: yet they put me to shame, for they glowed with the purest love of her country. She has walked on fiery ploughshares since then; she has trodden the furnace, and her beautiful bare feet are seared since they trod the cool vintage with me on the slopes above the Taravo . . . Priske, open the first of those bottles, yonder, with the purple seal! Here is that very wine, my friends. Pour and hold it up to the sunset before you taste. Had ever wine such a royal heart? I will tell you how to grow it. Choose first of all a vineyard facing south, between mountains and the sea. Let it lie so that it drinks the sun the day through; but let the protecting mountains carry perpetual snow to cool the land breeze all the night. Having chosen your site, drench it for two hundred years with the blood of freemen; drench it so deep that no tap-root can reach down below its fertilising virtue. Plant it in defeat, and harvest it in hope, grape by grape, fearfully, as though the bloom on each were a state's ransom. Next treat it after the recipe of the wine of Cos; dropping the grapes singly into vats of sea water, drawn in stone jars from full fifteen fathoms in a spell of halcyon weather and left to stand for the space of one moon. Drop them in, one by one, until the water scarcely cover the mass. Let stand again for two days, and then call for your maidens to tread them, with hymns, under the new moon. Ah, and yet you may miss! For your maidens must be clean, and yet fierce as though they trod out the hearts of men, as indeed they do. A king's daughter should lead them, and they must trample with innocence, and yet with such fury as the prophet's who said "their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment; for the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come" . . .'

My father lifted his glass. 'To thee, Emilia, child and queen!'

He drank, and, setting down his glass, rested silent for a while, his eyes full of a solemn rapture.

'My friends,' he went on at length with lowered voice, 'know you that old song?

Methought I walked still to and fro,  
And from her company could not go—  
But when I waked it was not so:  
In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure

‘All that autumn I spent under her father’s roof, and—my leave having been extended—all the winter following. The old Count had convinced himself by this time that by accepting the crown he would confer a signal service on Corsica, and had opened a lengthy correspondence with the two Paolis, whose hesitation to accept this view at once puzzled and annoyed him. For me, I wished the correspondence might be prolonged for ever, for meanwhile I lived my days in company with Emilia, and we loved.

‘I was a fool. Yet I cannot tax myself that I played false to duty, though by helping to crown her father I was destroying my own hopes, since as heiress to his throne Emilia must be far removed from me. We scarcely thought of this, but lived in our love, we two. So the winter passed and the spring came and the *macchia* burst into flower.

‘Prosper, you have never set eyes on the *macchia*, the glory of your kingdom. But you shall behold it soon, lad, and smell it—for its fragrance spreads around the island and far out to sea. It belts Corsica with verdure and a million million flowers—cistus and myrtle and broom and juniper; clematis and vetch and wild roses run mad. Deeper than the tall forests behind it the *macchia* will hide two lovers, and under the open sky hedge off all the world but their passion . . . In the *macchia* we roamed together, day after day, and forgot the world; forgot all but honour; for she, my lady, was a child of sixteen, and as her knight I worshipped her. Ah, those days! those scented days!

‘But while we loved and Count Ugo wrote letters, the two Paolis were doing; and by and by they played the strangest stroke in all Corsica’s history. That spring, at Aleria on the east coast, there landed a man of whom the Corsicans had never heard. He came out of nowhere with a single ship and less than a score of attendants—to be precise, two officers, a priest, a secretary, a major-domo, an under-steward, a cook, three Tunisian slaves, and six lackeys. He had sailed from Algiers, with a brief rest in the port of Leghorn, and he stepped ashore in Turkish dress, with scarlet-lined cloak, turban, and scimeter. He called himself Theodore, a baron of Westphalia, and he brought with him a ship-load of arms and ammunition, a thousand zechins of Tunis, and letters from half a dozen of the Great Powers promising assistance. Whether these were genuine or not, I cannot tell you.

‘Led by the two Paolis—this is no fairy tale, my friends—the Corsicans welcomed and proclaimed him king, without even waiting

for despatches from Count Rivarola (who had negotiated) to inform them of the terms agreed upon. They led him in triumph to Corte, and there, in their ancient capital, crowned and anointed him. He gave laws, issued edicts, struck money, distributed rewards. He put himself in person at the head of the militia, and blocked up the Genoese in their fortified towns. For a few months he swept the island like a conqueror.

‘All this, as you may suppose, utterly disconcerted the Count Ugo Colonna, who saw his dreams topple at one stroke into the dust. But the chiefs found a way to reconcile him. Their new King Theodore must marry and found a dynasty. Let a bride be found for him in Colonna’s daughter, and let children be born to him of the best blood in Corsica.

‘The Count recovered his good temper : his spirits rose at a bound : he embraced the offer. His grandsons should be kings of Corsica. And she—my Emilia——

‘We met once—once only—after her father had broken the news to her. He had not asked her consent : he had told her, in a flutter of pride, that this thing must be, and for her country’s sake. She came to me, in the short dusk, upon the terrace overlooking the Taravo. She was of heart too heroic to linger out our agony. In the dusk she stretched out both hands—ah, God, the child she looked ! so helpless, so brave !—and I caught them and kissed them. Then she was gone.

‘A week later they married her to King Theodore in the Cathedral of Corte, and crowned her beside him. Before the winter he left the island and sailed to Holland to raise moneys ; for the promises of the Great Powers had come to nothing, even if they were genuinely given. For myself, I had bidden good-bye to Corsica and sailed for Tuscany on the same day that he was married.

‘Now I must tell you that on the eve of sailing I wrote a letter to the queen—as queen she would be by the time it reached her—wishing her all happiness and adding that if, in the time to come, fate should bring her into poverty or danger, my estate and my life would ever be at her service. To this I received, as I had expected, no answer : nor did she, if ever she received it, impart its contents to her husband. He—the rascal—had a genius for borrowing, and yet ’twas I that had to begin by seeking him out to feed him with money.

‘News came to me that he was in straits in Holland, and had for a year been drumming the banks in vain : also that the Genoese,

whom his incursion had merely confounded, were beginning to lift their heads and take the offensive again. At first he had terrified them like a mad dog; the one expedient they could hit on was to set a price upon his head. Certainly he had gifts. He contrived—and by sheer audacity, mark you, backed by a fine presence—to drive them into such a panic that, months after he had sailed, they were petitioning France to send over troops to help them. The Corsicans sent a counter-embassy. “If,” said they to King Louis, “your Majesty force us to yield to Genoa, then let us drink this bitter cup to the health of the Most Christian King, and die.” King Louis admired the speech but nibbled at the opportunity. Our own Government meanwhile had either lost heart or suffered itself to be persuaded by the Genoese Minister in London. In the July after my Emilia’s marriage, our late Queen Caroline, as regent for the time of Great Britain, issued a proclamation forbidding any subject of King George to furnish arms or provisions to the Corsican malcontents.

‘And now you know, my dear Prosper, why I cast away the career on which I had started with some ambition. My lady lacked help, which as a British subject I was prohibited from offering. My conscience allowed me to disobey: but not to disobey and eat His Majesty’s bread. I flung up my post, and as a private man hunted across Europe for King Theodore.

‘I ran him to earth in Amsterdam. He was in handsome lodgings, but penniless. It was the first time I had conversed with him; and he, I believe, had never seen my face. I found him affable, specious, sanguine, but hollow as a drum. For *her* sake I took up and renewed the campaign among the Jew bankers.

‘To be short, he sailed back for Corsica in a well-found ship, with cannon and ammunition on board, and some specie—the whole cargo worth between twenty and thirty thousand pounds. He made a landing at Tavagna and threw in almost all his warlike stores. His wife hurried to meet him: but after a week, finding that the French were pouring troops into the island, and becoming (they tell me) suddenly nervous of the price on his head, he sailed away almost without warning. They say also that on the passage he murdered the man whom his creditors had forced him to take as supercargo, sold the vessel at Leghorn, and made off with the specie—no penny of which had reached his queen or his poor subjects. She—sad childless soul—driven with her chiefs and



counsellors into the mountains before the combined French and Genoese, escaped a year later to Tuscany, and hid herself with her sorrows in a religious house ten miles from Florence.

‘So ended this brief reign : and you, Prosper, have met the chief actor in it. A very few words will tell the rest. The French overran the island until ’41, when the business of the Austrian succession forced them to withdraw their troops and leave the Genoese once more face to face with the islanders. Promptly these rose again. Giafferi and Hyacinth Paoli had fled to Naples ; Hyacinth with two sons, Pascal and Clement, whom he trained there (as I am told) in all the liberal arts and in undying hatred of the Genoese. These two lads, returning to the island, took up their father’s fight, and have maintained it, with fair success as I learn. From parts of the island they must have completely extruded the enemy for a while ; since my lady made bold, four years ago, to settle these visitors of ours in her palace above the Taravo. It would appear, however, that the Genoese have gathered head again, and his business with them may explain why Pascal Paoli has not answered the letter I addressed to him, these eight months since, notifying my son’s claim upon the succession. Or he may have reckoned it indecent of me to address him in lieu of his Queen, who had returned to the island. I had not heard of her return. I heard of it to-day for the first time, and of her peril, which shall hurry us ten times faster than our pretensions. Prosper,’ my father concluded, ‘we must invade Corsica, and at once.’

‘Good Lord !’ exclaimed my uncle. ‘How ?’

‘In a ship,’ my father answered him as simply. ‘How otherwise ?’

Said my uncle, ‘But where is your ship ?’

Answered my father, ‘If you will but step outside and pick up one of these fir-cones in the grass, you can almost toss it on to her deck. She is called the *Gauntlet*, and her skipper is Captain Jo Pomery. I might have racked my brain for a month to find as good a skipper or a ship so well found and happily named as these which Providence has brought to my door. I attach particular importance to the name of a ship.’

My uncle ran his hands through his hair. ‘But to invade a kingdom,’ he protested, ‘you will need also an army !’

‘Certainly. I must find one.’

‘But where ?’

‘It must be somewhere in the neighbourhood, and within



twenty-four hours,' replied my father imperturbably. 'Time presses.'

'But an army must be paid. You have not only to raise one, but to find the money to support it.'

'You put me in mind of an old German tale,' said my father, helping himself to wine. 'Once upon a time there were three brothers—but since, my dear Gervase, you show signs of impatience, I will confine myself to the last and luckiest one. On his travels, which I will not pause to describe in detail, he acquired three gifts—a knapsack which, when opened, discharged a regiment of grenadiers; a cloth which, when spread, was covered with a meal; and a purse which, when shaken, filled itself with money.'

'Will you be serious, brother?' cried my uncle.

'I am entirely serious!' answered my father. 'The problem of an army and its pay I propose to solve by enlisting volunteers; and the difficulty of feeding my troops (I had forgotten it and thank you for reminding me) will be minimised by enlisting as few as possible. Myself and Prosper make two; Priske, here, three; I would fain have you accompany us, Gervase, but the estate cannot spare you. Let me see——' He drummed for a moment on the table with his fingers. 'We ought to have four more at least, to make a show: and seven is a lucky number.'

'You seriously design,' my uncle demanded, 'to invade the island of Corsica with an army of seven persons?'

'Most seriously I do. For consider. To begin with, this Theodore—a vain hollow man—brought but sixteen, including many non-combatants, and yet succeeded in winning a crown. You will allow that to win a crown is a harder feat than to succeed to one. On what reckoning then, or by what Rule-of-Three sum, should Prosper, who goes to claim what already belongs to him, need more than seven?

'Further,' my father continued, 'it may well be argued that the fewer he takes the better; since we sail not against the Corsicans but against their foes, and therefore should count on finding in every Corsican a soldier for our standard.'

'Thirdly, the Corsicans are a touchy race, whom it would be impolitic to offend with a show of foreign strength.'

'Fourthly, we must look a little beyond the immediate enterprise, and not (if we can help it) saddle Prosper's kingdom with a standing army. For, as Bacon advises, that state stands in danger whose warriors remain in a body and are used to donatives;

whereof we see examples in the Turk's Janissaries and the Pretorian Bands of Rome.

'And fifthly, we have neither the time nor the money to collect a stronger force. The occasion presses : and *fronte capillata est, post haec Occasio calva*. Time turns a bald head to us if we miss our moment to catch him by the forelock.'

'The Abantes,' put in Mr. Grylls, 'practised the direct contrary : of whom Homer tells us that they shaved the forepart of their heads, the reason being that their enemies might not grip them by the hair in close fighting. I regret, my dear Constantine, you never warned me that you designed Prosper for a military career. We might have bestowed more attention on the warlike customs and operations of the ancients.'

My father sipped his wine and regarded the Vicar benevolently. For closest friends he had two of the most irrelevant thinkers on earth and he delighted to distinguish between their irrelevancies.

'But I would not,' he continued, 'have you doubt that the prime cause of our expedition is to deliver my lady from the Genoese ; or believe that Prosper will press his claims unless she acknowledge them.'

'I am wondering,' said my uncle, 'where you will find your other four men.'

'Prosper and I will provide them to-morrow,' my father answered with a careless glance at me. 'And now, my friends, we have talked over-long of Corsica and nothing as yet of that companionship which brings us here—it may be for the last time. Priske, you may open another four bottles and leave us. Gervase, take down the book from the cupboard and let the Vicar read to us while the light allows.'

'The marker tells me,' said the Vicar, taking the book and opening it, 'that we left in the midst of Chapter 8—*On the Luce or Pike*.'

'Ay, and so I remember,' my uncle agreed.

The Vicar began to read :

And for your dead bait for a pike, for that you may be taught by one day's going a-fishing with me or any other body that fishes for him ; for the baiting of your hook with a dead gudgeon or a roach and moving it up and down the water is too easy a thing to take up any time to direct you to do it. And yet, because I cut you short in that, I will commute for it by telling you that that was told me for a secret. It is this : Dissolve gum of ivy in oil of spike, and therewith anoint your dead bait for a pike, and then cast it into a likely place, and when

it has lain a short time at the bottom, draw it towards the top of the water and so up the stream, and it is more than likely that you have a pike follow with more than common eagerness. And some affirm that any bait anointed with the marrow of the thigh-bone of a heron is a great temptation to any fish.

These have not been tried by me, but told me by a friend of mine, that pretended to do me a courtesy. But if this direction to catch a pike thus do you no good, yet I am certain this direction how to roast him when he is caught is choicely good——

‘Upon my soul, brother,’ interrupted my uncle Gervase, removing the pipe from his mouth, ‘this reads like a direction for the taking of Corsica.’

*(To be continued.)*

*NELSON: THE CENTENARY OF TRAFALGAR.*

BY ADMIRAL SIR CYPRIAN BRIDGE, G.C.B.

[The following article was read as an address, in compliance with the request of its Council, at the annual meeting of the Navy Records Society in July 1905. It was, and indeed is still, my opinion, as stated to the meeting in some prefatory remarks, that the address would have come better from a professed historian, several members of the Society being well known as entitled to that designation. The Council, however, considered that, as Nelson's tactical principles and achievements should be dealt with, it would be better for the address to be delivered by a naval officer—one, moreover, who had personal experience of the manœuvres of fleets under sail. Space would not suffice for treating of Nelson's merits as a strategist, though they are as great as those which he possessed as a tactician.]

CENTENARY commemorations are common enough ; but the commemoration of Nelson has a characteristic which distinguishes it from most, if not from all, others. In these days we forget soon. What place is still kept in our memories by even the most illustrious of those who have but recently left us ? It is not only that we do not remember their wishes and injunctions ; their existence has almost faded from our recollection. It is not difficult to persuade people to commemorate a departed worthy ; but in most cases industry has to take the place of enthusiasm, and moribund or extinct remembrances have to be galvanized by assiduity into a semblance of life. In the case of Nelson the conditions are very different. He may have been misunderstood ; even by his professional descendants his acts and doctrines may have been misinterpreted ; but he has never been forgotten.

The time has now come when we can specially do honour to Nelson's memory without wounding the feelings of other nations. There is no need to exult over or even to expatiate on the defeats of others. In recalling the past it is more dignified as regards ourselves, and more considerate of the honour of our great Admiral, to think of the valour and self-devotion rather than the misfortunes of those against whom he fought. We can do full justice to Nelson's memory without reopening old wounds.

The first thing to be noted concerning him is that he is the only man who has ever lived who by universal consent is without a peer. This is said in full view of the new constellation rising above

the Eastern horizon; for that constellation, brilliant as it is, has not yet reached the meridian. In every walk of life, except that which Nelson chose as his own, you will find several competitors for the first place, each one of whom will have many supporters. Alexander of Macedon, Hannibal, Cæsar, Marlborough, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon have been severally put forward for the palm of generalship. To those who would acclaim Richelieu as the first of statesmen, others would oppose Chatham, or William Pitt, or Cavour, or Bismarck, or Marquis Ito. Who was the first of sculptors? who the first of painters? who the first of poets? In every case there is a great difference of opinion. Ask, however, who was the first of admirals, and the unanimous reply will still be—'Nelson,' tried as he was by many years of high command in war. It is not only amongst his fellow-countrymen that his pre-eminence is acknowledged. Foreigners admit it as readily as we proclaim it ourselves.

We may consider what it was that gave Nelson this unique position among men. The early conditions of his naval career were certainly not favourable to him. It is true that he was promoted when young; but so were many other officers. Nelson was made a commander only a few months after the outbreak of war between Great Britain and France, and was made a post-captain within a few days of the declaration of war by Spain. An officer holding a rank qualifying him for command at the outset of a great war might well have looked confidently forward to exceptional opportunities of distinguishing himself. Even in our own days, when some trifling campaign is about to be carried on, the officers who are employed where they can take no part in it vehemently lament their ill fortune. How much more disheartening must it have been to be excluded from active participation in a great and long-continued conflict! This was Nelson's case. As far as his hopes of gaining distinction were concerned, fate seemed to persecute him pertinaciously. He was a captain of more than four years' seniority when the Treaty of Versailles put an end to the war of American independence. Yet, with the exception of the brief Nicaragua expedition—which by the side of the important occurrences of grand naval campaigns must have seemed insignificant—his services during all those years of hostilities were uneventful, and even humdrum. He seemed to miss every important operation; and when the war ended—we may almost say—he had never seen a ship fire a broadside in anger.

There then came what promised to be, and in fact turned out to be, a long period of peace. With no distinguished war service to point to, and with the prospect before him of only uneventful employment, or no employment afloat at all, Nelson might well have been disheartened to the verge of despondency. That he was not disheartened, but, instead thereof, made a name for himself in such unfavourable circumstances must be accepted as one of the most convincing proofs of his rare force of character. To have attracted the notice, and to have secured the confidence, of so great a sea-officer as Lord Hood constituted a distinction which could have been won only by merit so considerable that it could not long remain unrecognised. The war of American independence had still seven months to run when Lord Hood pointed to Nelson as an officer to be consulted on 'questions relative to naval tactics.' Professor Laughton tells us that at that time Nelson had never served with a fleet. Lord Hood was one of the last men in the world to go out of his way to pay to a youthful subordinate an empty compliment, and we may confidently base our estimate of an officer's merits on Lord Hood's belief in them.

He, no doubt, gave a wide signification to the term 'tactics,' and used it as embracing all that is included in the phrase 'conduct of war.' He must have found out, from conversations with, and from the remarks of, the young captain, whom he treated as intimately as if he was his son, that the latter was already, what he continued to be till the end, viz. a student of naval warfare. This point deserves particular attention. The officers of the Navy of the present day, period of peace though it be, can imitate Nelson at least in this. He had to wait a long time before he could translate into brilliant action the result of his tactical studies. Fourteen years after Lord Hood spoke of him as above related, by a 'spontaneous and sudden act, for which he had no authority by signal or otherwise, except his own judgment and quick perceptions,' Nelson entirely defeated the movement of the enemy's fleet, contributed to the winning of a great victory, and, as Captain Mahan tells us, 'emerged from merely personal distinction to national renown.' The justification of dwelling on this is to be found in the necessity, even at this day, of preventing the repetition of mistakes concerning Nelson's qualities and disposition. His recent biographers, Captain Mahan and Professor Laughton, feel constrained to tell us over and over again that Nelson's predominant characteristic was not mere 'headlong valour and

instinct for fighting'; that he was not the man 'to run needless and useless risks' in battle. 'The breadth and acuteness of Nelson's intellect,' says Mahan, 'have been too much overlooked in the admiration excited by his unusually grand moral endowments of resolution, dash, and fearlessness of responsibility!'

In forming a true conception of what Nelson was, the publications of the 'Navy Records Society' will help us greatly. There is something very remarkable in the way in which Mr. Gutteridge's volume<sup>1</sup> not only confirms Captain Mahan's refutation of the aspersions on Nelson's honour and humanity, but also establishes Professor Laughton's conclusions, reached ten years ago, that it was the orders given to him, and not his amour, which detained him at Naples at a well-known epoch. The last volume issued by the Society, that of Mr. Julian Corbett,<sup>2</sup> is, I venture to affirm, the most useful to naval officers that has yet appeared among the Society's publications. It will provide them with an admirable historical introduction to the study of tactics, and greatly help them in ascertaining the importance of Nelson's achievements as a tactician. For my own part, I may say with gratitude that but for Mr. Corbett's valuable work I could not have completed this article.

The most renowned of Nelson's achievements was that performed in his final battle and victory. Strange as it may seem, that celebrated performance has been the subject of much controversy, and, brilliant as it was, the tactics adopted in it have been freely, and indeed unfavourably, criticised. There is still much difference of opinion as to the preliminary movements, and as to the exact method by which Nelson's attack was made. It has been often asserted that the method really followed was not that which Nelson had expressly declared his intention of adopting. The question raised concerning this is a difficult one, and, until the appearance of Mr. Julian Corbett's recent work and the interesting volume on Trafalgar lately published by Mr. H. Newbolt, had not been fully discussed. The late Vice-Admiral P. H. Colomb contributed to the 'United Service Magazine' of September 1899 a very striking article on the subject of Nelson's tactics in his last battle, and those who propose to study the case should certainly peruse what he wrote.

The criticism of Nelson's procedure at Trafalgar in its strongest form may be summarised as follows. It is affirmed that he drew

<sup>1</sup> *Nelson and the Neapolitan Jacobins.*

<sup>2</sup> *Fighting Instructions*, 1530, 1816.



up and communicated to the officers under his orders a certain plan of attack; that just before the battle he changed his plan without warning; that he hurried on his attack unnecessarily; that he exposed his fleet to excessive peril; and, because of all this, that the British loss was much heavier and much less evenly distributed among the ships of the fleet than it need have been. The most formidable arraignment of the mode of Nelson's last attack is, undoubtedly, to be found in the paper published by Sir Charles Ekins in his book on 'Naval Battles,' and vouched for by him as the work of an eyewitness—almost certainly, as Mr. Julian Corbett holds, an officer on board the *Conqueror* in the battle. It is a remarkable document. Being critical rather than instructive, it is not to be classed with the essay of Clerk of Eldin; but it is one of the most important contributions to the investigation of tactical questions ever published in the English tongue. On it are based nearly, or quite, all the unfavourable views expressed concerning the British tactics at Trafalgar. As it contains a respectfully stated, but still sharp, criticism of Nelson's action, it will not be thought presumptuous if we criticise it in its turn.

Notwithstanding the fact that the author of the paper actually took part in the battle, and that he was gifted with no mean tactical insight, it is permissible to say that his remarks have an academic tinge. In fact, they are very much of the kind that a clever professor of tactics, who had not felt the responsibilities inseparable from the command of a fleet, would put before a class of students. Between a professor of tactics, however clever, and a commanding genius like Nelson the difference is great indeed. The writer of the paper in question perhaps expressed the more general opinion of his day. He has certainly suggested opinions to later generations of naval officers. The captains who shared in Nelson's last great victory did not agree among themselves as to the mode in which the attack was introduced. It was believed by some of them, and, thanks largely to the *Conqueror* officer's paper, it is generally believed now, that, whereas Nelson had announced his intention of advancing to the attack in lines-abreast or lines-of-bearing, he really did so in lines-ahead. Following up the path of investigation to which, in his article above mentioned, Admiral Colomb had already pointed, we can, I think, arrive only at the conclusion that the announced intention was adhered to.

Before the reasons for this conclusion are given it will be convenient to deal with the suggestions, or allegations, that Nelson



exposed his fleet at Trafalgar to unduly heavy loss, putting it in the power of the enemy—to use the words of the *Conqueror's* officer—to 'have annihilated the ships one after another in detail'; and that 'the brunt of the action would have been more equally felt' had a different mode of advance from that actually chosen been adopted. Now, Trafalgar was a battle in which an inferior fleet of twenty-six ships gained a victory over a superior fleet of thirty-three. The victory was so decisive that more than half of the enemy's capital ships were captured or destroyed on the spot, and the remainder were so battered that some fell an easy prey to the victor's side soon after the battle, the rest having limped painfully to the shelter of a fortified port near at hand. To gain such a victory over a superior force of seamen justly celebrated for their spirit and gallantry very hard fighting was necessary. The only actions of the Napoleonic period that can be compared with it are those of Camperdown, the Nile, and Copenhagen. The proportionate loss at Trafalgar was the least in all the four battles.<sup>1</sup> The allegation that, had Nelson followed a different method at Trafalgar, the 'brunt of the action would have been more equally felt' can be disposed of easily. In nearly all sea-fights, whether Nelsonic in character or not, half of the loss of the victors has fallen on considerably less than half the fleet. That this has been the rule, whatever tactical method may have been adopted, will appear from the following statement. In Rodney's victory (April 12, 1782) half the loss fell upon nine ships out of thirty-six, or one-fourth; at 'The First of June' it fell upon five ships out of twenty-five, or one-fifth; at St. Vincent it fell upon three ships out of fifteen, also one-fifth; at Trafalgar half the loss fell on five ships out of twenty-seven, or very little less than an exact fifth. It has, therefore, been conclusively shown that, faulty or not faulty, long-announced or hastily adopted, the plan on which the battle of Trafalgar was fought did not occasion excessive loss to the victors or confine the loss, such as it was, to an unduly small portion of their fleet. As bearing on this question of the relative severity of the British loss at Trafalgar, it may be remarked that in that battle there were several British ships which had been in other great sea-fights. Their losses in these latter were in nearly every

<sup>1</sup> Camperdown . . . .	825 loss out of 8,221: 10 per cent.
The Nile . . . .	896 " " 7,401: 12.1 "
Copenhagen . . . .	941 " " 6,892: 13.75 "
Trafalgar . . . .	1,690 " " 47,256: 3.58 "

case heavier than their Trafalgar losses.<sup>1</sup> Authoritative and undisputed figures show how baseless are the suggestions that Nelson's tactical procedure at Trafalgar caused his fleet to suffer needlessly heavy loss.

It is now necessary to investigate the statement that Nelson, hastily and without warning, changed his plan for fighting the battle. This investigation is much more difficult than that into the losses of the British fleet, because, whilst the latter can be settled by arithmetic, the former must proceed largely upon conjecture. How desirable it is to make the investigation of the statement mentioned will be manifest when we reflect on the curious fact that the very completeness of Nelson's success at Trafalgar checked, or, indeed, virtually destroyed, the study of tactics in the British Navy for more than three-quarters of a century. His action was so misunderstood, or, at any rate, so variously represented, that it generally passed for gospel in our Service that Nelson's method consisted merely in rushing at his enemy as soon as he saw him. Against this conception his biographers, one after another, have protested in vain.

At the outset of this investigation it will be well to call to mind two or three things, simple enough, but not always remembered. One of these is that advancing to the attack and the attack itself are not the same operations. Another is, that, in the order of sailing in two or more columns, if the ships were 'by the wind' or close-hauled—the column-leaders were not abeam of each other, but bore from one another in the direction of the wind. Also, it may be mentioned that by simple alterations of course a line-abreast may be converted into a line-of-bearing and a line-

Ship	Action	Killed	Wounded	Total	Trafalgar		
					Killed	Wounded	Total
<i>Ajax</i> . . .	Rodney's (Ap. 12, 1782)	9	10	19	2	9	11
<i>Agamemnon</i> . .	"	15	22	37	2	8	10
<i>Conqueror</i> . .	"	7	22	29	3	9	12
<i>Defence</i> . . .	1st June	17	36	53	7	29	36
<i>Bellerophon</i> . .	The Nile	49	148	197	27	123	150
<i>Swiftsure</i> . . .	"	7	22	29	9	8	17
<i>Defiance</i> . . .	Copenhagen	24	21	45	17	53	70
<i>Polyphemus</i> . .	"	6	25	31	2	4	6

In only one case was the Trafalgar total loss greater than the total loss of the same ship in an earlier fight; and in this case (the *Defiance*) the number of killed at Trafalgar was only about two-thirds of the number killed in the other action.

of-bearing into a line-ahead, and that the reverse can be effected by the same operation. Again, adherence to a plan which presupposes the enemy's fleet to be in a particular formation after he is found to be in another is not to be expected of a consummate tactician. This remark is introduced here with full knowledge of the probability that it will be quoted as an admission that Nelson did change his plan without warning. No admission of the kind is intended. 'In all cases of anticipated battle,' says Mahan, 'Nelson was careful to put his subordinates in possession both of his general plans and, as far as possible, of the underlying ideas.' The same biographer tells us, what is well worth remember-

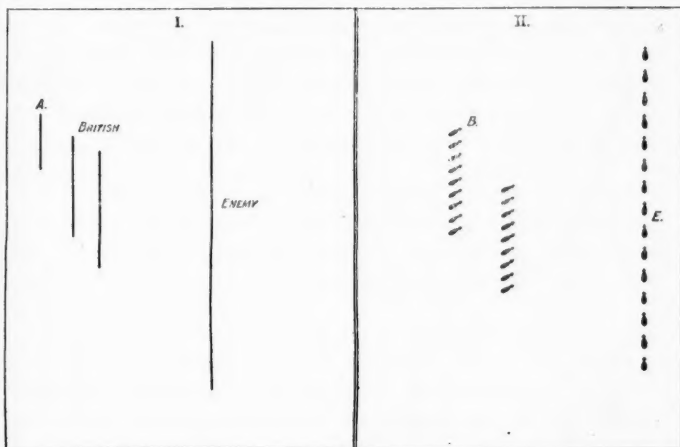


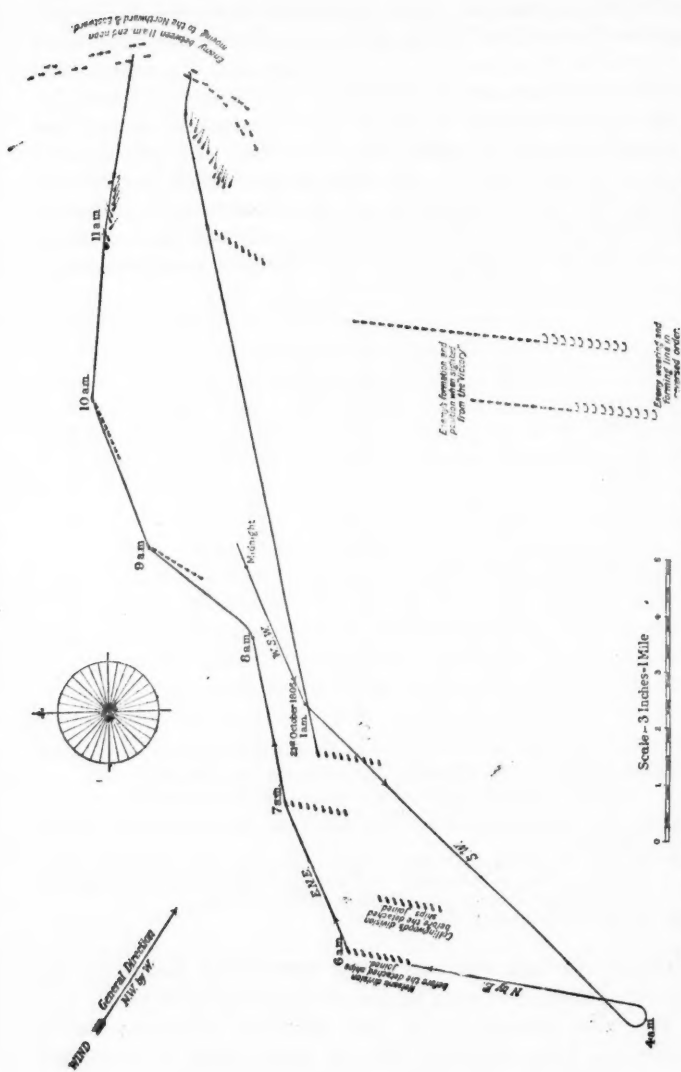
DIAGRAM EXPLAINING NELSON'S MEMORANDUM OF OCTOBER 9, 1805.

(This is generally attached to copies of the Memorandum.)

- A. was the Advance Squadron to be distributed amongst the two British Divisions.
- B. The way in which the British ships would have been placed in their Divisions if in exact station. The ships are heading so as to reach the points of attack in the enemy's line which is moving.
- E. The same as regards the enemy.

ing, that 'No man was ever better served than Nelson by the inspiration of the moment; no man ever counted on it less.'

The plan announced in the celebrated memorandum of October 9, 1805, indicated, for the attack from to windward, that the British fleet, in what would be called on shore an echelon of two main divisions and an 'advance squadron,' would move



MOVEMENTS OF THE BRITISH AND FRANCO-SPANISH FLEETS BEFORE NOON OF OCTOBER 21, 1805.

The regulation distance between columns, unless otherwise ordered by the Admiral, was 1½ mile. There is evidence that, in the earlier part of October 21, 1805, the British columns were one mile apart, though the exact time at which this distance was taken up is not known.

against an enemy assumed to be in single line-ahead. The 'advance squadron,' it should be noted, was not to be ahead of the two main divisions, but in such a position that it could be moved to strengthen either. The name seems to have been due to the mode in which the ships composing the squadron were employed in, so to speak, 'feeling for' the enemy. On October 19 six ships were ordered 'to go ahead during the night'; and, besides the frigates, two more ships were so stationed as to keep up the communication between the six and the Commander-in-Chief's flagship. Thus eight ships in effect composed an 'advance squadron,' and did not join either of the main divisions at first.

When it was expected that the British fleet would comprise forty sail-of-the-line and the enemy's fleet forty-six, each British main division was to be made up of sixteen ships; and eight two-deckers added to either division would increase the strength of the latter to twenty-four ships. It is interesting to note that, omitting the *Africa*, which ship came up late, each British main division on the morning of October 21, 1805, had nine ships—a number which, by the addition of the eight already mentioned as distinct from the divisions, could have been increased to seventeen, thus, except for a fraction, exactly maintaining the original proportion as regards the hostile fleet, which was now found to be composed of thirty-three ships.

During the night of October 20–21 the Franco-Spanish fleet, which had been sailing in three divisions and a 'squadron of observation,' formed line and stood to the southward, heading a little to the eastward of south. The 'squadron of observation' was parallel to the main body and to windward (in this case to the westward) of it, with the leading ships rather more advanced.

The British main divisions steered W.S.W. till 1 A.M. After that they steered S.W. till 4 A.M. There are great difficulties about the time, as the notation of it<sup>1</sup> differed considerably in different ships; but the above hours are taken from the *Victory's* log. At 4 A.M. the British fleet, or rather its main divisions, wore and stood N. by E. As the wind was about N.W. by W., the ships were close-hauled, and the leader of the 'lee-line,' i.e. Collingwood's flagship, was when in station two points abaft the *Victory's* beam

<sup>1</sup> Except the chronometers, which were instruments of navigation so precious as always to be kept under lock and key, there were no clocks in the Navy till some years after I joined it. Time on board ship was kept by half-hour sand-glasses.

as soon as the 'order of sailing' in two columns—which was to be the order of battle—had been formed.

About 6 A.M. the enemy's fleet was sighted from the *Victory*, and observed to bear from her E. by S. and be distant from her ten or twelve miles. The distance is corroborated by observed bearings from Collingwood's flagship.<sup>1</sup> Viewed from the British ships, placed as they were relatively to it, the enemy's fleet must have appeared as a long single line-ahead, perhaps not very exactly formed. As soon as the hostile force was clearly made out, the British divisions bore up and stood to the eastward, steering by the *Victory's* compass E.N.E. The position and formation of the British main divisions were by this made exactly those in which they are shown in the diagram usually attached to the celebrated memorandum of October 9, 1805. The enemy must have appeared to the British, who were ten or twelve miles to windward of him, and on his beam, as if he were formed in line-ahead. He therefore was also in the position and formation assigned to him in that diagram.

At a time which, because of the variety in the notations of it, it is difficult to fix exactly, but somewhere between 7 and 8 A.M., the enemy's ships wore together and endeavoured to form a line to the northward, which, owing to the direction of the wind, must have been about N. by E. and S. by W., or N.N.E. and S.S.W. The operation—not merely of wearing, but of both wearing and reforming the line, such as it was—took more than an hour to complete. The wind was light; there was a westerly swell; the ships were under easy sail; consequently there must have been a good deal of leeway, and the hostile or 'combined' fleet headed in the direction of Cadiz, towards which, we are expressly told by a high French authority—Chevalier—it advanced.

Nelson had to direct the course of his fleet so that its divisions, when about to make the actual attack, would be just opposite the points to which the respective hostile ships had advanced in the meantime. In a light wind varying in force a direct course to those points could not be settled once for all; but that first chosen was very nearly right, and an alteration of a point, viz. to E. by N., was for a considerable time all that was necessary. Collingwood later

<sup>1</sup> It would necessitate the use of some technicalities to explain it fully; but it may be said that the bearings of the extremes of the enemy's line observed from his flagship prove that Collingwood was in the station that he ought to have occupied when the British fleet was in the Order of Sailing and close to the wind.

made a signal to his division to alter course one point to port, which brought them back to the earlier course, which by the *Victory's* compass had been E.N.E. The eight ships of what has been referred to as the 'advance squadron' were distributed between the two main British divisions, six being assigned to Collingwood's and two to Nelson's. They did not all join their divisions at the same time, some—probably owing to the distance at which they had been employed from the rest of the fleet and the feebleness of the breeze—not till several hours after the combined fleet had been sighted.

Collingwood preserved in his division a line-of-bearing apparently until the very moment when the individual ships pushed on to make the actual attack. The enemy's fleet is usually represented as forming a curve. It would probably be more correct to call it a very obtuse re-entering angle. This must have been largely due to Gravina's 'squadron of observation' keeping away in succession, to get into the wake of the rest of the line, which was forming towards the north. About the centre of the combined fleet there was a gap of a mile. Ahead and astern of this the ships were not all in each other's wake. Many were to leeward of their stations, thus giving the enemy's formation the appearance of a double line, or rather of a string of groups of ships. It is important to remember this, because no possible mode of attack—the enemy's fleet being formed as it was—could have prevented some British ships from being 'doubled on' when they cut into the enemy's force. On 'The First of June,' notwithstanding that the advance to the attack was intended to be in line-abreast, several British ships were 'doubled on,' and even 'trebled on,' as will be seen in the experiences on that day of the *Brunswick*, *Marlbrough*, *Royal Sovereign*, and *Queen Charlotte* herself.

Owing to the shape of the hostile 'line' at Trafalgar and the formation in which he kept his division, Collingwood brought his ships, up till the very moment when each proceeded to deliver her attack, in the formation laid down in the oft-quoted memorandum. By the terms of that document Nelson had specifically assigned to his own division the work of seeing that the movements of Collingwood's division should be interrupted as little as possible. It would, of course, have been beyond his power to do this if the position of his own division in the echelon formation prescribed in the memorandum had been rigorously adhered to after Collingwood was getting near his objective point. In execution, therefore, of the



service allotted to his division Nelson made a feint at the enemy's van. This necessitated an alteration of course to port, so that his ships came into a 'line-of-bearing' so very oblique that it may well have been loosely called a 'line-ahead.' Sir Charles Ekins says that the two British lines '*afterwards* fell into line-ahead, the ships in the wake of each other,' and that this was in obedience to signal. Collingwood's line certainly did not fall into line-ahead. At the most it was a rather oblique line-of-bearing almost parallel to that part of the enemy's fleet which he was about to attack. In Nelson's line there was more than one alteration of course, as the *Victory's* log expressly states that she kept standing for the enemy's van, which we learn from the French accounts was moving about N. by E. or N.N.E. In the light wind prevailing the alterations of course must have rendered it, towards the end of the forenoon, impossible to keep exact station, even if the *Victory* were to shorten sail, which we know she did not. As Admiral Colomb pointed out, 'Several later signals are recorded which were proper to make in lines-of-bearing, but not in lines-ahead.' It is difficult to import into this fact any other meaning but that of intention to preserve, however obliquely, the line-of-bearing which undoubtedly had been formed by the act of bearing-up as soon as the enemy's fleet had been distinguished.

When Collingwood had moved near enough to the enemy to let his ships deliver their attacks it became unnecessary for Nelson's division to provide against the other's being interrupted. Accordingly, he headed for the point at which he meant to cut into the enemy's fleet. Now came the moment, as regards his division, for doing what Collingwood's had already begun to do, viz. engage in a 'pell-mell battle,'<sup>1</sup> which surely may be interpreted as meaning a battle in which rigorous station-keeping was no longer expected, and in which 'no captain could do very wrong if he placed his ship alongside that of the enemy.'

In several diagrams of the battle as supposed to have been fought the two British divisions just before the moment of impact are represented as converging towards each other. The Spanish diagram, lately reproduced by Mr. Newbolt, shows this, as well as the English diagrams. We may take it, therefore, that there was towards the end of the forenoon a convergence of the two columns, and that this was due to Nelson's return from his feint at the hostile van to the line from which he intended to let go his

<sup>1</sup> Nelson's own expression.



ships to deliver the actual attack. Collingwood's small alteration of course of one point to port slightly, but only slightly, accentuated this convergence.

Enough has been said here of Nelson's tactics at Trafalgar. To discuss them fully would require a whole treatise.

I can only express the hope that in the Navy the subject will receive fuller consideration hereafter. Nelson's last victory was gained, be it remembered, in one afternoon, over a fleet more than 20 per cent. its superior in numbers, and was so decisive that more than half of the hostile ships were taken. This was the crowning effort of seven years spent in virtually independent command in time of war—seven years, too, illustrated by more than one great victory.

The more closely we look into Nelson's tactical achievements, the more effective and brilliant do they appear. It is the same with his character and disposition. The more exact researches and investigations of recent times have removed from his name the obloquy which it pleased some to cast upon it. We can see now that his 'childlike, delighted vanity'—to use the phrase of his greatest biographer—was but a thin incrustation on noble qualities. As in the material world valueless earthy substances surround a vein of precious metal, so through Nelson's moral nature there ran an opulent lode of character, unimpaired in its priceless worth by adjacent frailties which, in the majority of mankind, are present without any precious stuff beneath them. It is with minds prepared to see this that we should commemorate our great Admiral.

Veneration of Nelson's memory cannot be confined to particular objects or be limited by locality. His tomb is wider than the space covered by dome or column, and his real monument is more durable than any material construction. It is the unwritten and spiritual memorial of him, firmly fixed in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen.

## CONSULE PLANCO.

BY J. H. YOXALL, M.P.

I SUPPOSE there can be no possible manner of doubt that we nineteenth-century folk are fairly landed in the twentieth now? Was it not only yesterday that we debated arithmetically as to when the twentieth century actually did begin? Yet here we are in 1905, and positively it is as much as seventy-five years ago since Thackeray made his runaway trip to Paris. Think of that! Three-quarters of a century ago, and Thackeray even then no child, though he seems to us still so modern and near. Nothing can be more disconcerting to one's sense of position on the map of Time than to have a change of century occur after one has 'come to forty year.' A man may well be 'of his century,' but how can he be of two? So long as we dwelt in the nineteenth, anything which had happened since Waterloo seemed comparatively recent; but now that the twentieth has enveloped us, the first half of the nineteenth and all the early and mid-Victorian doings begin to seem quite antique. To one who first read 'Vanity Fair' in the 'seventies it comes with a shock to-day to note that when Thackeray wrote of Dobbin and Becky the 'sound of revelry by night' at Brussels was only thirty years ended. For Thackeray seems to live yet, and I believe I recently met him on the stairs at the Reform Club, bright-spectacled, broad-beaming, benign.

At Easter 1830, Thackeray, arriving at Calais 'by the night-mail packet,' put up at Dessein's, of course; Dessein's, where Sterne descended; Dessein's, with its immortalised *remise*. Alas! I have put up at a hundred inns of old France, but never at Dessein's. There is a Hôtel Dessin at Calais to-day, but no Dessein's. You may put up at the Hôtel d'Angleterre down by the bank and the bridge of the Loire at Blois, the fine old hostel to which Turner came jogging when he was sketching for his 'Rivers of France,' but you will never put up at Dessein's. Thackeray did. In days *consule Planco* (as he loved to write) he came to 'that charming old Hôtel Dessein, with its court, its gardens, its lordly kitchen, and its princely waiter—a gentleman of the old school,

who has welcomed the finest company in Europe.' To the inn where Sterne and Horace Walpole and Arthur Young had taken their ease Thackeray came, fresh from term at Cambridge, and perhaps he did not think of Sterne at Calais then. But eight years after he had written 'The English Humourists' he went to Dessein's again—in fancy at any rate—and told the world about it in the CORNHILL. He saw the ghost of Laurence Sterne at Dessein's; he slept and dreamed in what had been Yorick's bed. Waking in the smaller hours, he perceived Sterne's 'lean figure in the black satin breeches, his sinister smile, his long, thin fingers pointing in the moonlight'—fancy, no doubt, but there have been less substantial ghosts. All fancy, because at the end of that particular 'Roundabout Paper' Mr. Michael Angelo Titmarsh confessed that 'Dessein's of nowadays'—that was in the 'sixties—'is not the Dessein's which Mr. Sterne, and Mr. Brummell, and I recollect in the good old times.' For the town of Calais has bought the old hotel, and 'Dessein' has gone over to 'Quillac's.' Even Quillac's is *consule Planco* now; there is no Hôtel Quillac at Calais to-day.

Thackeray's London has become *consule Planco*. Passing 'from Shepherd's Inn into Holborn' one day, he stood looking 'at Woodgate's *bric-à-brac* shop, which I can never pass without delaying at the windows.' If he were going to be hanged, he wrote (though the Holborn journey to the 'triple tree' at Tyburn was a bygone before Thackeray saw the light), 'I would beg the cart to stop, and let me have one look more at that delightful *omnium gatherum*.' When was that collection scattered? What dealer is Woodgate's business heir? Can any china maniac tell me? But, tearing himself from Woodgate's window, he came to 'Gale's little shop'—the little shops are the best; if I were the commercial owner of an *omnium gatherum* it should house in a little shop. 'Gale's' was 'No. 47, which is also a favourite haunt of mine,' Mr. Roundabout told his readers. And in the 'little back parlour' of 'Gale's little shop'—where is it now, what is its number in the changed High Holborn, and what is its present trade?—he found 'old Saxe and Sèvres plates—Fürstenberg, Carl Theodor, Worcester, Amstel, Nankin, and other jimcrockery.' A most incomplete and rococo list, the china maniac of to-day would tell him, if they could stand beside each other at the window of one of the 'curio shops'—'curio' is a word that was unknown *consule Planco*—which stud New Oxford Street in the present year of our Lord.

Amstel, forsooth! Who nowadays goes hunting for Amstel porcelain? Can it be possible that Thackeray was blind to the pellucid beauty of Chelsea glaze? Was there not 'Bow' to be bought for a song, *consule Planco*, and did he neglect to buy it? Had he never heard of 'Lowestoft,' that enigma and battle-horse of all porcelain? In Thackeray's eyes was 'Nankin' the only 'Oriental'? 'Wedgwood,' too, and 'Mason,' and 'Whieldon,' and 'Walton,' the wares of Swansea and Nantgarw, old Derby biscuit figures, and Salopian willow-pattern—were these unknown to Mr. Titmarsh? Maybe they did not know everything *consule Planco*, after all.

Going into 'the little back room' of 'Gale's little shop,' and Mr. Gale being called out 'by a customer'—it would seem that Thackeray did *not* go in to buy—'an actual GUILLOTINE' was visible in the little back room, and the strange tale of 'The Notch on the Axe' was instantly born behind the beaming spectacles. Cagliostro was father to that tale, as Casanova was to 'Barry Lyndon.' Thackeray knew his eighteenth century as well as he knew his Paris—the old, beetling, narrow-streeted, cornery Paris that, alas! is almost gone. The guillotine stood 'some nine feet high, narrow, a pretty piece of upholstery enough'; made of mahogany, I fancy—in colour appropriately red. The customer in the front shop was bargaining with Mr. Gale for something older than the guillotine, offering him 'three pounds fourteen and sixpence for a blue shepherd in *pâte tendre*,' the 'Roundabout Paper' tells us. That also is *consule Planco*, alas! for who nowadays can pick up a soft-paste Sèvres shepherd, dipped in that specific blue of 'turquoise seen through sea,' and gold-flecked, for 'three pounds fourteen and sixpence'?

Gale's little shop, in which such bargains were to be found, stood somewhere near to Kingsgate Street, an old and distinguished neighbour of High Holborn. But where is Kingsgate Street to-day? Every summer Americans search for it, and lament its vanishing with tears. Kingsway has obliterated Kingsgate Street, and I owe the London County Council a gentle grudge for that. It was rather a squalid shrine of pilgrimage, perhaps, but even as late as 1875 you might espy in Kingsgate Street a barber's shop with a caged bird or two in the doorway; and I will not swear that once I did not perceive the face of Mrs. Gamp at the window there. But even Dickens himself did not know that she dwelt in Kingsgate Street when, on July 1, 1837, he went

driving past her abode in what was still called a hackney carriage, on his way to the Bull and Mouth in St. Martin's-le-Grand, and the mail-coach for Dover. He landed at Calais for 'a trip to Flanders'—the very word 'Flanders' suggests Laurence Sterne, by-the-by—and he would descend at Dessein's, the old Dessein's, and be magnificently attended by the 'princely waiter' there.

Railways were the death of Dessein's; but in 1837, when Dickens first went 'gallivanting abroad,' there was not an inch of railroad in Flanders. Not till about the days when he went to Italy through France—and even then he travelled 'post,' as he made the Dorrits do, you remember—did the iron road begin to run in Belgium. There is a tale, apocryphal but cherished, of what the Belgian engineers did when they came home from England with sheaves of sketches, plans, specifications, and particulars about 'the new English travelling road,' to build one like it in the Low Country. They made their first railway across the flats between Brussels and Liège, and when it was finished, on almost the very day before it was to be opened with pomp and circumstance, the chief engineer, looking at his English plans and comparing them with his own substantial achievement, suddenly struck his forehead with a tragic gesture, and cried, 'Mon Dieu, we've forgotten the tunnel!' A railway without a tunnel could not be a railway, they thought, *consule Planco*; so they covered in the deepest cutting they could find.

'I remember old diligences,' Thackeray wrote, 'and old postilions in pigtailed and jack-boots, who were once as alive as I am, and whose cracking whips I have heard in the midnight many and many a time. Now where are they? Behold, they have been ferried over Styx.' But that was written in the 'sixties; in 1844 the French postilions were still on the hither bank. To-day, when the motor-car carries you through Touraine or Gascony, antiquating even the *chemin de fer*—when a diligence can be found only after long search among the Landes or the dunes of Brittany, and only the ghosts of postilions career upon the moonlit roads, it is *consule Planco* with a vengeance to think how Dickens and Thackeray travelled through France. Where now is Astley's? And where Franconi's? Dickens found the French postilions to be 'something like the courier of St. Petersburg in the circle at Astley's or Franconi's.' Does the courier of St. Petersburg ever ride the sawdust ring in our day?

A caustic drawing by Rowlandson shows us still the French

postilions in their 'immense jack-boots, sometimes a century old.' The pair that Dickens described must have been fashioned in the years when Maurice de Saxe went blazing about Europe, a meteor of war. The postilion's boots were 'so ludicrously disproportionate to the wearer's foot that the spur, which is put where his own heel comes, is generally half way up the leg.' Ghosts of old postboys, cracking whips in the moonlight, and spurring with your apparent calves, whither do ye travel now? Yet behind the postilions one rode into all the magic and art and chronicle of an Europe that America had not vulgarised, in the days when Plancus was H.B.M. consul abroad.

Dickens pictures the journeys of those days for us vividly :

The man comes out of the stable with his whip in his hand and his shoes on, and brings out, in both hands, one boot at a time, which he plants on the ground by the side of his horse with great gravity, until everything is ready. When it is—and oh Heaven! the noise they make about it!—he gets into the boots, shoes and all, or is hoisted into them by a couple of friends; makes all the horses kick and plunge; cracks his whip like a madman; shouts, 'En route—Hi!' and away we go. He is sure to have a contest with his horse before we have gone very far; and then he calls him a Thief and a Brigand, and a Pig and whatnot; and beats him about the head as if he were made of wood.

Behind such a cavalier and such steeds of endurance what curious vehicles used to traverse Europe in days when George III. was King at home! To this day a hired chariot is called a 'mylord' in parts of the central Midi of France. The *pairs d'Angleterre* were the great travellers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and it was to allure their custom that in every posting-town a Hôtel d'Angleterre set up its sign. 'Mylords à louer,' I have often read upon the walls of inns, where an older inscription tells that 'on loge à pied et à cheval'—which is, at the latest, a seventeenth-century invitation. There are still extant French inns incredibly old. At Brive, in the Hôtel de Bordeaux—perhaps the pleasantest inn of old France—you may occupy the chamber in which Pope Pius VII. slept the night of January 29, 1814; in which, also, Ferdinand VII. of Spain passed the night of March 15 the same year; and in which Wellington mused, the night of May 2, same year, of the report he should make to the Allied Sovereigns in Paris, to whose councils he had been convoked. But, a little farther south, you may house and eat in the Hôtel Ste. Marie, where St. Louis of France, Henry II. of England, Simon de Montfort, and even Cœur de Lion himself descended, just within the gate of the oldest pilgrim-place in Europe, Rocamadour. In the

eighteenth century the most comfortable inns on the mainland were to be found in France, and up to them vehicles, more numerous perhaps, and certainly more picturesque, than the motor-cars which frequent them to-day, came driven. The mylord, the chariot, the berline, the roomy, low-swung sleeping-carriage, the hooded cabriolet for two, and the *désobligeante*, a closed carriage for one, passed along post-haste, from hotel to auberge, milord to milord, Cagliostro to Casanova, Fox to Barry Lyndon, Calais to the Alps, Strasbourg to Bayonne. The lighter vehicles took to pieces, and were portered over mountain passes sometimes. When Sterne wanted to travel from Calais to Paris, he went into the *remises* at Dessein's, and finally espied the *désobligeante*. 'Four months had elapsed since it had finished its career of Europe in the corner of Monsieur Dessein's coachyard, and, having sallied out thence but a vamped-up business at first, though it had been twice taken to pieces on Mont Sennis, it had not profited much by its adventures.' There still are vehicles to be hired in rural France which seem the handiwork of a maniac coach-builder; and even in the palmy days of posting the carriages were often as ramshackle as the harness and as ancient as the post-boy's boots.

Undergraduate Thackeray, on his fugitive trip to Paris, would go straight through, day and night, I fancy, not stopping except for a meal at the Hôtel de France in Montreuil-sur-Mer—that walled and embattled little bourg which is not now, nor ever was, *sur mer*. To this day that delightful old inn is almost exactly what it was when Sterne, in mounting his *voiture* under the *portecochère*, gave alms to many beggars and made a sentimental note of the deed. Mr. Eyre Crowe, I think, pictured the scene. But if Thackeray (who had, like his Barry Lyndon, 'the finest natural taste for lace and china of any man') had gone into the kitchen of the inn, he would have found upon the walls and dressers rare faience of old France, Strasbourg delft, Desvres and Marseilles ware, 'rose' platters, 'coq' plates, Rouen basins, and what not, as one may find them there to-day. But they are not to be got and carried away, either for love or money, those relics of the potter's art *consule Ludovico*, let me warn.

Dickens would bait his post-horses at Montreuil, but it is certain he did not visit Dessein's in 1844; for he landed at Boulogne, going from the Bull and Mouth by the Post Office to Boulogne Mouth in France. But, south of Paris, and 'En route, hi!' again, he stayed at the Hôtel de l'Ecu, at Sens, one may be sure; for the



inn at Sens answers to his description of it to this very day. Happy even now the traveller who sees the cathedral tower of Sens stand up like a beacon in water, who skirts and crosses the pleasant river Yonne, and comes with crack of whip and 'Houp!' and 'Hué, donc!' in almost a diligence from the *gare* to the *hôtel*. Yet I never met but one Englishman at Sens, and he was a clergyman, come, in almost a professional capacity, to view the cathedral, on which the designer of Canterbury choir tried his 'prentice hand,' to the glory of God and St. Stephen. But here is the picture which Dickens saw sixty-one years ago, and at Sens one may see it yet:

It is market morning. The market is held in the little square outside, in front of the Cathedral. The country people are grouped about, with their clean baskets before them. Here, the lace sellers; there, the butter and egg sellers; there, the fruit sellers; there, the shoe-makers. The whole place looks as if it were the stage of some great theatre and the curtain had just run up for a picturesque ballet. And there is the Cathedral to boot; scene-like; all grim and swarthy, and mouldering and cold; just splashing the pavement in one place with faint purple drops, as the morning sun, entering by a little window in the eastern side, struggles through some stained-glass panes on the western.

*Consule Planco*, one came to Sens in style:

The ninety-six bells upon the horses—twenty-four apiece—have been ringing sleepily in your ears for half an hour or so, when, down at the end of the long avenue of trees through which you are travelling, the first indication of a town appears, in the shape of some straggling cottages; and the carriage begins to rattle and roll over a horribly uneven pavement—

the very *pavé* that British bicyclists curse as they go in and out of old French towns to-day.

As if the equipage were a great firework, and the mere sight of a smoking cottage chimney had lighted it, instantly it begins to crack and splutter, as if the very devil were in it. Crack, crack, crack, crack. Crack—crack—crack! Hélo! Holà! Vite! Voleur! Brigand! Hi, hi, hi! En r-r-r-route! Rumble, rumble, rumble; clatter, clatter, clatter; crick, crick, crick; and here we are in the yard of the Hôtel de l'Écu d'Or, used up, gone out, smoking, spent, exhausted; but sometimes making a false start unexpectedly, with nothing coming of it—like a firework to the last!

*Consule Planco*, a Continental journey was an exploration of almost African wildness, in which you must be guided and protected by a *courrier particulier*. The Dickens' family coach came to Sens under the charge of a famous courier indeed—'best of servants and most beaming of men!' 'Truth to say, he looked a good deal more patriarchal than I, who, in the shadow of his portly

presence, dwindled to no account at all,' Boz wrote, in his 'Pictures from Italy.' 'The landlord of the Hôtel de l'Écu d'Or dotes to that extent on the courier, that he can hardly wait for his coming down from the box, but embraces his very legs and boot-heels as he descends. 'My courier! My brave courier! My friend! My brother!' The landlady loves him, the *femme-de-chambre* blesses him, the *garçon* worships him. The courier asks if his letter has been received? It has, it has! Are the rooms prepared? They are, they are! The best rooms for my courier; the rooms of State for my courier; the whole house is at the service of my best of friends! The courier 'carries a green leather purse outside his coat, suspended by a belt. The idlers look at it; one touches it. It is full of five-franc pieces. Murmurs of admiration are heard. The landlord falls upon the courier's neck, and folds him to his breast!' Then the family—the Dickenses or the Dorrits, as the case may be—get out of the carriage and explore the inn. 'The whole party are in motion. The brave courier in particular is everywhere; looking after the beds, having wine poured down his throat by his dear brother the landlord, and picking up green cucumbers—always cucumbers; heaven knows where he gets them—with which he walks about, one in each hand, like truncheons.' But whither, alas! have vanished all such gallant couriers now?

I once had the honour to know a courier, but he is dead. He died in 1887, cherishing a particular hatred for 'Cook's'—not cooks with a small 'c'—to the last. 'Cook's' had ruined him, he swore by Saint Fiacre, and we shall not look upon his like again. To the shades of bygone explorers of Europe, Evelyn, Young, Sterne, Turner, Thackeray, Dickens, and their couriers I consecrate these pages, in pious and votive offering of sympathy and lament. They are gone, with their century and their Europe; gone, the romantic discomfort of old travel; gone, the mouldering beauty of unrestored antique edifices; gone, the simple and stately 'ease in mine inn.' *Consule Planco*, the world was smaller, Europe was more vivid, strange, and alluring than now. But swiftly the day is coming when even a steam railway shall be a piece of archaeology; and it is small comfort to think that our degenerate age will be *consule Planco* in its turn.

*THE BREATH UPON THE SPARK.*

BY HUGH CLIFFORD, C.M.G.

A stick, once fire from end to end ;  
 Now, ashes save the tip that holds a spark !  
 Yet, blow the spark, it runs back, spreads itself  
 A little where the fire was : thus I urge  
 The soul that served me, till it task once more  
 What ashes of my brain have kept their shape,  
 And these make effort on the last o' the flesh,  
 Trying to taste again the truth of things !

ROBERT BROWNING.

It was at Burnham in Somersetshire—that queer little old-world watering-place, with all the soft, green West Country behind it, and the grey waters of the Bristol Channel before—that I met him. The sea-front, which is only a sea-front because some Balbus has builded there a wall to prevent Burnham from slipping ignominiously into the sea, and which cannot with propriety be called a parade, since there are only three women, half-a-dozen children, and a brace of men to parade up and down it, has none of the mechanical horrors which in increasing numbers vulgarise and deface the modern seaside 'resort.' It looks out upon a stretch of sand devoid of switchbacks, flying-machines, and the like, beyond which is a belt of grey mud, leading to an expanse of untroubled, greyish sea, and somewhere in the dim distance lies Cardiff and the coast-line of Wales. It is the most conservative place in the world—and the quietest. It was precisely as it is now when I first remember it some thirty years ago—the same sand, the same mud, the same sea, the same rows of rather ancient houses, the same useless wooden lighthouse hiding itself discreetly from passing ships amid the big dry sand dunes. 'As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,' might have been written of Burnham, one is tempted to think, so powerless have been the changing years to work in it any visible change ; and as I looked upon the old familiar sights, recognising as life-long friends suddenly recalled to memory the ancient landmarks that had been my playmates in those days of early childhood, when existence was one unbroken, irresponsible game of play, a great sadness was upon me. The years, the thirty years, that had slid by since last

I stood on the old sea-front, had fashioned and broken so many things for me; they had seen such fair castles of hope builded and brought to nought; such big failures, such trivial successes; such battles won and lost; such dreams woven and rent to pieces; they had watched Youth, the invincible, the very sanguine, the ambitious, give place, for me, to Middle Age, the sombre, the chastened, the sadly experienced, whose one object in life was to 'carry on,' lest some worse thing befall. And that these years, which had held for me so much of disappointment and of disillusionment, had passed over the head of Burnham leaving it untouched, seemed to emphasise the pathos of the change which they had wrought in me. Therefore, as I gazed out upon the peaceful, sleepy scene, my heart was heavy within me.

For old sake's sake I bent my steps towards the broken-down stone pier which points a little stumpy finger at the sea, and when I had skated out along the wet slabs to the end I became suddenly aware that it was already occupied by a solitary figure that crouched above a camp-stool upon which it was seated. As I drew near I saw that it was the figure of an old man who held in his tremulous hands a fishing-rod with which he was angling feebly and ineffectually for hypothetical fishes. There is always, to my mind, something pathetic in the patience of the persistent and unsuccessful fisherman, something indicative of a woefully slackened vitality that renders possible this long-drawn triumph of unrewarded hope over an experience that holds no promise; and in this case, it seemed to me, the pathos was deeper than usual, so old and bent and feeble was the man who sat there, so shaky the hold he had upon his rod, so weak the efforts he made to cast his line far out from the pier-head.

'I hope my presence won't interfere with your sport, sir,' I hazarded when I came up to him.

He looked up at me out of two dull, steel-grey eyes, deeply sunken in a face lined, crossed, and recrossed with a network of wrinkles, a face from which the colour had been parched by age till the hue had become that of a piece of charred paper. A heavy white moustache hung over his mouth, and beneath it the shrunk chin wagged in a sort of palsy.

'Not at all,' he said in a voice that was so quiet, so far away, that it was almost a whisper. 'Not at all. There are not many fish here to be frightened, for one thing; besides, I always like company.'

'That's very nice of you,' I said, as I seated myself on the edge of the pier at his side. 'Have you caught anything?'

'No,' he replied, with a short laugh that sounded somehow as though he were laughing at himself. 'No, I haven't caught anything. I haven't even had a bite for days.'

I laughed too.

'Do you fish here much?' I asked.

'All day and every day, I think; that is to say, when it is not too cold.'

'And do you never catch anything?' I inquired.

'Sometimes,' he answered in the same passionless way. 'Sometimes, but not often.' Then, after a pause, 'I fear you must think me a very foolish old fellow, but, you see, you are young; you are still at the time of life when a man can do things. I, why, I haven't even enough nerve left to play golf! I've done everything that I am ever going to do. Now I am waiting—waiting for the end; and while I wait, I want only quiet and a great peace so that I may listen to the voices of other days, feel the throb of the life that once was mine, to—how does it go?—

To live again in memory  
With those old faces of our infancy,  
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,  
Two handfuls of grey dust, shut in an urn of brass!'

He mouthed the words lovingly, speaking, as it seemed, more to himself than to me, and I sat silent, watching him. His old eyes had in them a steady patience, which was not only the patience of the undefeatable fisherman. He had said that he was waiting—waiting for the end; and the moment that he had uttered the words they had seemed to supply, in some sort, the key-note of the man. He sat there, at the end of the old pier, himself so old and bowed and time-worn, waiting, without hurry, without fear, without any trace of the fever of expectancy, but with an immense settled calm and patience, not for the fish that never came, but for the End, to whose certain coming he offered neither a welcome nor a prayer for delay.

'I, too, have been living "again in memory" this morning, sir,' I said presently. Somehow one 'sir'd' the old fellow instinctively, and not only by reason of his years. 'It is more than a quarter of a century since I was last at Burnham, and the marvellous absence of all change in the old place contrasts so acutely with the changes of which I am conscious in myself that my mind has been

running back through the past, arraigning the years that have gone over my head and the part which I have played in them, as I never can remember to have done before.'

'Ah!' he said, with a long in-drawing of his breath. 'So you have felt it too! That is the genius of Burnham! It is itself so unchanging that it furnishes, as it were, a blank canvas upon which the pictures of the years, and of everything those years have held—for you, for me, for all of us—are cast with such a wealth of colour, of detail, of distinctness, that here, to a degree unknown in all the world besides, it is given to a man to live through each one of them again in imagination with something of the actuality that belonged to it when the past was the present. That is why I come to Burnham; that is why I sit here hour after hour and day after day—dreaming, and making belief to fish. But you—forgive me, you're so young; yours is still the time for *doing*. Don't waste it in dreams, man; don't waste it in dreams! The time when the will to do is with you yet, but the power to do has been taken from you utterly—when you lack even enough of nerve for golf—will come all too soon. When it comes, as come it must, let there be something done to furnish food for dreams—not dreams of the future, such as young men cherish, empty hopes that torture and elude, but dreams of the past, of big emotions tasted, of the raw, red wine pressed from the grapes of life to the last, least drop, of great things done, of a man's record, such as a man may take before his Maker, humble by reason of its blemishes, humble, but not ashamed!'

The old steel-grey eyes were flashing, the hands, from which the rod had fallen, had lost their palsy as they clenched and unclenched in passionate gesticulation, the bent frame was straightened, the tired, even voice was ringing with enthusiasm. I thought of Browning's lines, of the

Stick, once fire from end to end;  
Now, ashes save the tip that holds a spark!

and it seemed to me that mine had been the breath which, all unwittingly, had fanned that spark to flame.

'I've done my share of work up to now,' I said. 'I've only just come up to breathe preparatory for another dive into the vortex. I have more than a score of years of service behind me, and if life and health hold out, I suppose I ought to have nearly as many more ahead of me. My time for doing, as you say, sir, is

not yet done, and yet, when I look back over the past, I don't squeeze much satisfaction out of it. I've done so little of the much I once hoped to do ; so much remains to be done that I know now I shall never accomplish. It is all really rather a failure, so far as I can see.'

'That is because you have not lived long enough yet,' he replied, with calm conviction. 'Wait till the time for doing is over, wait till you have outlived ambition, till you can get, as it were, a bird's-eye view of your life at last. Then you will see life—your life—clearly, and see it whole. The mistakes will be there, the sins, ay, and the regrets ; but if you have done something—something to justify your existence—God being merciful, you will learn, perhaps, to forgive yourself, even as God will forgive you ; and it may be much will be pardoned you, because you have done—much !'

'It is a comforting creed,' I said, rather bitterly.

'Yet it is the creed our Lord preached,' he said gravely. 'I dare say the man with the two talents often told himself in his old age that he might have turned them into something more than four, yet I don't think his Master was hard upon him. When we are young we *think* we have five talents, and we *know* that we shall convert them into twenty. When a man reaches your age he *knows* that he has only two talents, and he *thinks* that he very likely won't succeed in making four of them. When you are as old as I am you will see that you had only one, or part of one, and you will learn to thank God upon your knees if you have not left that to rust in a napkin. Where has your service been ?'

'In the East, sir,' I replied.

'The East ! The East !' he repeated, turning the word upon his tongue as though it had (as in very truth it has) a flavour of its own. 'The oldest of the continents—and the youngest ! Asia and Age are one, for every man who has eyes wherewith to see, an imagination to give him a glimpse into the tremendous Past, a brain and a heart to aid him to an understanding of something of her marvels and her mysteries ; but in the mind of every Anglo-Asiatic who is worth his salt, Asia and Youth are also one ! We went to Asia boys, we came back old men, no matter what our age was ! Youth and Asia were both ours for a space, and in leaving Asia we left our Youth behind. It was the biggest gift that a man could give, and we gave it to her, our Mistress—gave it ungrudgingly, with both hands, and we asked for nothing in return ! Yet



she gave us something—memories : memories of Asia and of Youth, eternal memories that will be with us to the end—the end for which I sit waiting, while I dream and dream and make believe to catch mythical fish ! ’

Again he laughed softly, as though the picture of himself which his last words had painted struck him as whimsical ; but to me, since my ‘time for doing’ was not yet ended, albeit Asia had robbed me of my youth, and since the years had not yet brought to me his full measure of peace and of contentment, the contrast between the vigorous past and the inertia of the present was a thing of infinite pathos.

For a while I sat smoking in silence. Then the old man spoke again.

‘Do I weary you with my haverings and my memories ? No ? Well, to me, as to others of my years, the things of long ago are more vivid, more real, than the happenings of yesterday. I live in the past, as all men must who have no future—save the end. Will you bear with an old man’s foibles and share with me my memories, or—would it bore you too much ? ’

‘Bore me, sir ? ’ I said. ‘Of course it won’t ! ’ For indeed the old fellow interested me keenly. ‘I’m down on my luck this morning, disheartened by the past, despairing rather about the future, not too pleased with the present. It is good to think that there are some men, at any rate, whose memories can give both comfort and contentment when the struggle is at last ended.’

‘Don’t mistake me,’ he said musingly. ‘My past is full of blemishes, full of mistakes, packed closely with false moves, with things I would fain have otherwise, only, all that is irreparable, done with, past. There are broken bits that no man can pick up, do what he will. My solace lies in the knowledge that I have been young, that I have lived, that I have used my life—let its failures be what they may—and that God has let me do a few things which even now appear to me to have been worth doing.’

‘It seems like blowing my own trumpet—like *bakking*, as we used to say—to put these memories of mine into words, but I don’t mean it so. You see, the man of whom I am speaking was someone so different from the man I now am that I hardly realise that I am, in truth, speaking of myself. To-day, as I have told you, I haven’t an atom of nerve left in me ; then— Well, let us call it vanity, if you will ; but it is like a father’s pride in his son, or a son’s pride in his father, it is so impersonal, so remote.

'There comes to every man under the sun, in one shape or another, the "tide in his affairs" which, though it may not lead on to fortune, nor yet down to ruin, proves him, shows what is in him, brings out anything worth counting that may be latent in him, and exposes his weaknesses too, often enough. That tide came to me in the Terrible Year—in '57—which found us English folk, little handfuls of us, isolated, almost defenceless, facing the brown millions who for once were banded together against us by hate and wrath. I was an Assistant Deputy Commissioner of sorts, stowed away in a God-forsaken district at the Back of Beyond, and had been so long alone among the natives that I could not speak half-a-dozen sentences of my own language without slipping in a word or two of Persian or Hindustani. I prided myself upon having my fingers on the pulse of native life in that district, and upon knowing as much about the dusky insides of Orientals as is good for any man, but for months before the trouble came I was uneasy. Things were going forward of which I could not get the hang. There was a sort of undercurrent of whisperings whose meaning I could not catch, that yet was somehow audible at the back of the familiar speech. There was mystery in the air; you felt it, yet could find to it no key. It was like smelling blood, like smelling blood!

'During those months I knew what it is to be possessed by a demon of fear! I was so afraid that I did not dare report to headquarters lest men should know what a coward I was; besides, I had nothing tangible to report. I told myself that it was all fancy, that Asia was playing the devil with me, that I was losing my nerve. I longed to apply for leave—they used to give you long spells of furlough after a ten years' tour of service in those days—but I was ashamed to ask for it simply because I knew in the heart of me that it was blank, unreasoning fear that prompted the desire. So I hung on, hung on with both hands, as it were, shuddering with funk. It was a devil of a bad time—the worst in my life—and it taught me things about myself that left me sick with shame. I was awaiting a catastrophe—I knew not what—and was convinced that when it came it would find me a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, an empty thing and vain. They searched the soul of me, those months!

'I was in the deepest folds of the Dark Valley when Harold (that was not his real name) came up into my district to shoot, bringing his wife and sister with him. I did not know him from Adam, and I had not seen a European lady for over three years,

so I was a bit bothered by the intrusion. I felt shy and awkward in the company of the ladies, was ashamed of the unkempt appearance which I knew myself to present, and was so out of the habit of dealing with white folk that I was only too glad to ship the party off into a corner of the district where game was plentiful as soon as I could contrive to make the necessary arrangements. I did not care much for Harold, nor yet for his sister, though she was a pretty girl, but Mrs. Harold charmed and fascinated me. Harold was a cranky sort of beggar, always grouching about the natives and about his surroundings in a fashion that got upon my nerves. His sister turned up her nose at most things, including me, and took everything that was done for her as though it was her right, without acknowledgment or 'Thank you'; not that I wanted to be thanked, but I disliked being treated as a kind of upper servant. Mrs. Harold was—well, just everything that a woman can be! Beautiful, with a sort of glory of beauty that yet had in it a certain dainty dignity that held her worlds above you, and good—you could see the goodness looking out of her eyes—and kind, in thought and deed. I have never seen anybody like her before or since; there never can have been another like her. God broke the mould in which she was cast; the world would be different from what it is if there were many made in her image and likeness!

'Yet, as I tell you, I shipped them off as quickly as I could. I hated to think what a boor she must find me, and after they were gone I used to wake up in the night and go hot and cold all over at the thought of the awkward, inept, stupid things that I had said and done in her presence. And more than ever I was ashamed because I knew myself to be afraid—to go in deadly terror of whisperings and of shadows that might, after all, be only the creatures of my imagination.

'I had had a bad time before they came; I had a worse time still after they had gone. I had lost faith in myself ages before; now I began to lose faith in my work, to ask that merciless, eternal question *Cui bono?* *Cui bono?* When a white man in the East once falls to setting himself that riddle he is in a woefully bad case. So long as we can feel that we are doing something that justifies our presence east of Suez we can hold on, we can fight, we can endure. Doubt as I then doubted, and the devil of despair has you in his grip!

'The Harolds had been gone a matter of some three weeks when the news reached me of the outbreak down country. I was

sitting on my verandah, smoking my pipe and dreaming, when Haji Muhammad Akhbar, one of the leading natives of the place, came to me suddenly out of the luminous darkness of the night. There was nothing to give me a hint of what was coming, but the moment I saw him my heart stood still, and I *knew* that my shadowy fears had at last materialised. He was shaking with excitement as he told me of the mutiny of our troops down south, and of the rapidity with which the disaffection was spreading. I believe that in many out-of-the-way stations the intelligence was received by Englishmen at first with blank incredulity, but to me it came, in some sort, as something for which I had been waiting, something that I was expecting, almost as something which I already knew, and it brought with it a sensation of utter helplessness and of ungovernable fear! Englishmen, it is said, are brave. They may be; I don't know. But here, at any rate, was one Englishman who was mad afraid!

'I can remember sitting grasping the arms of my chair while the whole world went round and round with me, and through the chaos came the voice of Haji Muhammad Akhbar, quivering with excitement, its tones rising in mocking, triumphant cadences as though they belonged to some devil who was foretelling the ruin of the British in India.

"The disaffection spreadeth fast," he was saying, when presently the meaning of his words was borne in upon my numbed brain. "This very night it is known in our bazaars; to-morrow the villages also will know. Then, perhaps—who knoweth save Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate?—the *Raj* of the Sahib-log will have its ending in blood, as in blood it also had its beginning! But this time, or so it seems, it will not be the blood of our people only that will be shed, nor will it be the turn of our women-folk to be made chattels for the pleasure of new husbands!"

'At that word fear left me and a great wrath alone remained. I rose from my chair, and in an instant I had him by the throat.

"Have a care, dog," I cried, as I shook him to and fro while he gasped and whined and struggled. "Have a care for thy words and for thy deeds. The *Raj* of the Sahib-log is not yet ended, and if blood is to be let, see that it be not thine! In this district I am the *Raj* of the English, and so long as there is life left in me, so long shall the *Raj* endure, and so long shall pig-folk like thee have a watch over their doings and a bridle upon their lips, lest more evil things befall them!"

‘I threw him from me half strangled, and in a moment he was all abjectness and entreaty, while I still quivered with a passion of anger.

“‘Begone!’ I cried, spurning him with my foot. “‘Begone, and tell to the people of the bazaars and villages that the *Raj* hath still something of life left in it, and how thou hast this night tasted of its quality.” He gathered himself together and, whining excuses, dropped back into the darkness whence he had come.

‘When he had gone, I stood for an instant dazed in a world that had of a sudden been shattered about my head. I realised for the first time a fact which I had always *known*—the disproportion of the white man’s numbers in India to those of the people of the soil. It brought to me something of the feeling of hopelessness and of impotence which a child knows when he finds himself alone and in the dark, when he finds himself in imagination opposing his tiny personality to the immensity of the universe—something of the sense of utter impotence that comes to us at times in nightmares. And the fear was back upon me again in all its cruel, overwhelming force. The catastrophe had befallen, and for months I had told myself that when it arrived it would find me wanting. For a minute or two that forecast was fulfilled. I was quaking body and soul, dizzy, dazed, defeated.

‘Then the words which Haji Muhammad Akhbar had spoken, hinting of the fate that awaited English women in India, flashed across my mind, and with them the thought of the one woman in India who mattered—of Mrs. Harold. With that thought came also the necessity for action, and when a man is called upon to act, and that without an instant’s delay, he is relieved from the curse of thinking. It is the habit of taking thought, of letting the imagination have full play—it is that habit, more than conscience, believe me, that makes cowards of us all.

‘Harold’s camp lay some thirty miles to the north of my station, just beyond those villages whose people would presently know what was already known in the bazaars. As soon as the news spread, the lives of Harold and of his wife and sister would not be worth a moment’s purchase. Could I find a messenger whom I could trust? Could I, at this juncture, trust anybody? I hoped that I could, but it was only a hope; I could not be sure, and the risk was too great. In a second of inspiration I saw that I must go myself. I never had a doubt as to the necessity, but even then I knew that my action would have an ugly look; that it might

easily be interpreted as a desertion of my post in the hour of peril ; that the natives might so translate its meaning, and see in what they would call my flight the fall and the ending of the British *Raj*. I think that during the weary months of suspense I must have exhausted my capacity for fear, since now I was not afraid even of being thought to be afraid, even of doing that which might have the appearance of a craven act.

‘I slipped out of the bungalow, went to the stables, found and saddled my mare, locked the stables securely behind me, and rode out into the darkness. The *saises* had all gone down to the bazaar to hear the news, and not a soul in the bungalow or behind it was aware of my going. There was a hum like that of a disturbed beehive coming from the bazaar, where lights were blazing and passing to and fro, and drums and tomtoms pulsed and throbbed with a fevered, restless beat. You could feel the excitement by which the place was possessed tingling in the air like electricity. I took a path which soon led me clear of the town, and directly I was in the open country I put the mare into a hard canter, and headed for the Harolds’ camp. The memory of that ride is with me yet as a thing of yesterday—the darkness of the night through which I was speeding, the vast shapeless shadows that rose up before, slid past me, and dropped behind, the half-seen kine that made reluctant way for me as I cantered across the grazing-grounds, the dogs that barked from the villages as I rattled past, the droning voices of men intoning the Kurân, the crowing of untimely cocks, and the quivering emotions that jostled one another within me, all combined with the pace at which I was travelling to make one vivid picture that, as I conjure it up again before my mind’s eye, sets me thrilling with the strenuous excitement of that hour. Also that ride holds for me, in some sort, the very essence of my youth. These old knees grow strong again for an elusive instant as I feel them gripping the saddle ; energy and strength again are mine as I feel myself borne forward at that impetuous pace with the effortless *abandon* that belongs to early manhood. The time for dreaming and for fear was ended, and I knew it. The time for action had come, and with it a sort of intoxication of recklessness that filled me with a fierce joy and pride. I was happy then, supremely happy, and I can remember that, as I dashed across the open country, I threw my arms aloft in a frenzy of exultation because a big emergency had come, and at last, at last, I was sure of myself ! It was a glorious hour, that hour of reaction after



long depression and despair, and its glowing memories are with me yet!

'It was only a little after midnight that I reached my destination, and as soon as I had rubbed my mare down and tethered her, I contrived, not without difficulty, to arouse Harold. There was a little moonlight showing by then, and I led him away from the tents, and told him the news that had come in.

"You mustn't lose a second," I said. "The one chance of safety lies in Mrs. Harold and your sister getting to the fort as soon as may be."

"And do you seriously believe all this rubbish?" Harold inquired, standing there in his pyjamas, his face unnaturally white in the moonlight.

"I do," I said.

"On no better grounds than mere native *gup*?"

"On that and on a hundred and one things that have gone before and now have a new meaning," I replied.

"Well, I don't believe a word of it," he said sneeringly. "Life wouldn't be worth having in India if one let oneself be scared by every rumour, by every lie the natives tell, by every shadow. It's all rot, man; a *canard* of the worst. If there had been anything in it, you would have had some official intimation before this."

"They've got their hands pretty full down country, I'm thinking," I rejoined. "They won't have leisure to think about out-stations for a bit. If we wait for official intimations, we shall wait too long."

"Well, we'll talk it over in the morning," he said with a yawn, stretching himself insolently.

"You will do nothing of the sort," I said, and I could hear my voice vibrating with anger. "You may think that I am a coward, if you like, but I do not mean to take any chances. I am satisfied that the thing is a true bill. I'm responsible for what happens in this district, and by God, man, you have got to do what I say!"

"Well, I do think that you are rather a nervous person," said Harold, with a laugh for which I itched to strike him. "It is an immense bore being turned upside down like this for nothing; but we'll see what my wife says."

"Let me speak to her, please," I said, and "As you will," he answered with a shrug.



‘We walked back to the tent in silence, and presently Mrs. Harold came out to us, her long, slim figure wrapped in a white dressing-gown.

“Your husband thinks that I am an alarmist,” I said, “but I have information of a general mutiny of our troops down country, and I *know* that the news is true. I have left my post in a moment of extreme emergency in order to bring you all in to my fort, which is the nearest approach to safety that I have it in my power to offer you. Everything, in so far as I am concerned, depends upon my getting back before daybreak, and before the natives know that I have left the place; but I won’t go without you. Will you come—now, at once?”

“Yes,” she said simply, bending those grave, true eyes of hers steadily upon me. “We will come, of course. And thank you. You have risked a great deal to come to us; we understand that, and we are grateful.”

“Of course,” chimed in Harold, grudgingly. “No doubt you did what you thought right, and of course we’ll do what you wish; but it all appears to me to be a trifle melodramatic and unnecessary—‘moving incidents by flood and field,’ and that sort of thing, don’t you know. Much better in the story-books than in real life, especially when it robs a tired man of his sleep.”

‘It took the best part of an hour to make all ready, and Miss Harold joined her brother in his scoffings at the news and at its bearer, but I cared little enough for that. I knew that the event would prove me to have been right; Mrs. Harold had thanked me and had shown that she understood. I asked for nothing more.

‘I rode at her side during the whole of the remainder of that night, and the sight of her willowy figure, swaying gently to the motion of her horse, and of her calm, steadfast face, which the faint moonlight only half revealed, made me feel as though I was journeying through the darkness in the company of a guardian angel. The sense of my proximity to her, and my knowledge of the fact that her safety must largely depend upon me, upon my efforts, upon my wits, upon my courage, infused into me a new enthusiasm and energy, and fixed my determination to come out top, or die, solid as a rock. I, who had been so mightily afraid, longed now, positively longed to fight with dragons, not only for the British *Raj* in my little corner of India, but for her. That was a glowing hour too, and I thank God for it!

'Just after daybreak we came to the outskirts of the town, and I led the way up to my fort, which lay to the right of my bungalow, by a route that passed through the uttermost fringe of the crowded native ant-heap. It was just as well, for though it was so early the place was thronged, and in a little open space a Muhammadan mendicant in a long green gown was exhorting the people. His face, livid with excitement and contorted with enthusiasm, was straining heavenward, and his long, white beard flew back over his shoulder as he poured out a stream of fierce words and jibes that bit deep into the hearts of his hearers. He was foretelling the downfall of the British *Raj*, the extinction of the infidel, and victory to the Children of the Prophet in the great Jihad now breaking over India. I could catch many of the brutal insults he was pouring upon our people, of the promises he was making to those who would rise against us, and I tell you my blood ran hot with rage as I listened to him.

"I wish we had half a company of our fellows here," said Harold hoarsely in my ear.

'I glanced over my shoulder at him, and I saw that he had gone white, white to the lips, and that his bridle-hand was trembling.

'A native in the crowd yelled something in a raucous, falsetto voice, and I caught the words at once.

"Your fellows down country have mutinied and killed their officers," I cried to Harold. "Did you hear what that man said?"

"God help us! God help us!" he exclaimed in that same hoarse, tense voice. "Let us get on . . . to the fort . . . to the fort!"

'A great strapping Muhammadan, a butcher in a red turban, leaped from the crowd, and seized the rein of Mrs. Harold's horse with one hand. The other held a meat chopper. The horse reared, and I saw her face rigid with fear as she gave a little cry. I rose in my stirrups, raised my loaded hunting-crop, and brought the butt down full between the fellow's eyes. He dropped like a log, and I heard the crunch of bones as Mrs. Harold's horse came down upon him heavily.

"Get on to the fort, Harold, in God's name, and take the ladies with you," I cried breathlessly, for now I was laying about me with that heavy butt, and the people, screaming with fear, were tumbling over one another in their eagerness to get beyond the reach of my arm.

'I caught a glimpse of Mrs. Harold's face, flushed with excitement, her eyes flashing with enthusiasm and a sort of fierce delight.

"Oh, how splendid of you!" she cried. "How splendid!" and then she and Harold and his sister were off at a gallop up the hill towards the fort, Harold leading.

'The crowd had fallen back before me, and I rode straight at the Muhammadan preacher. He never moved, and the words streamed from him in an unbroken torrent. I hit him, as I had hit the butcher, full between the eyes, and I felt the bone shatter beneath the blow. Then I reined in my horse and turned upon the people, speaking to them over the writhing body of their prophet.

"You dogs!" I cried. "You dogs who dare to bark because fools tell you that the *Raj* of the British is ended, get to your kennels like the whipped curs you are! And when sense returneth to you, come to me at the fort craving pardon, lest I send word to the Government of the wickedness in your hearts, and the hide be stripped from you in punishment! Go!"

'And then, why then, and it brings tears to my eyes when I recall it—for they are *men*, these Muhammadans of India, though like children they be easily led astray or aright as a man may chance to lead them—the crowd set up a throaty shout, not of rage or of defiance, but of approval and admiration.

"It is well done!" cried many voices. "It is well done, and behold our Sahib is a man. Let the *Raj* stand or fall elsewhere, here the *Raj* and our Sahib are one; and see, the Sahib stands while the fool who spoke vain things lies yonder in the dust! It is in truth well done!"

'Haji Muhammad Akhbar stood forward, and it seemed to me that he was somewhat swollen as to the neck, but it was he who led the shouting, and "It was well done, Sahib!" he cried, "And behold, the *Raj* stands! It is the will of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate!"

'I turned my horse slowly, and walked him up the hill to the fort. He was going very short, poor brute, after his long effort. As I neared the gate I saw that the Harolds had halted to see what was happening, and the thirty or forty troopers, men recruited for the most part from the neighbouring hill-people, thronged the entrance, jabbering their delight. There was scant love lost between them and the natives of the town. But for me at that moment the world held only one thing—Mrs. Harold's face—and that too said, "It is well done!" and I think also "Thank you!"

'That was my great moment!

'After that there came some anxious times, but in the end mine was one of the districts that had no Mutiny history—there were heaps of them. It was a trying time, all the same, though I kept the work going as regularly as though nothing untoward was occurring out there in the vast battle-ground of British India, and it tried Harold badly. His nerve had been shaken by that scene in the town, and the worst of it was that he couldn't "come again," and that his wife saw it. I know she did, though she was too brave and too loyal to give a sign; and the thing hurt her badly, and me through her. I was for ever trying to cover up Harold's lack of pluck from her eyes, but he would not let it be hid. Sometimes a man who is full of fear seems to lose all shame; he did, and the exhibition was somehow degrading to all of us.

'At last it was safe for them to leave, and I thanked God for it, though life didn't seem to offer much to me when she had gone out of it. Anyhow, I knew it was the only thing for me, if I was to avoid making an ass of myself, and she . . . well, she was everything that a woman ought to be!

'The evening before they were to go away I came upon her sitting in the verandah of my bungalow—we had moved out of the fort ages before, in spite of Harold's frenzied protests—and she began to speak at once of all, she was pleased to say, they owed to me.

"Don't!" I said. "It is I who owe a debt—to you. It is you who have helped me, helped me to play the man."

"I don't think you wanted much help to do that," she said very seriously. I remember every word she uttered; I have repeated them to myself, so often, so often.

"God knows I do," I said roughly. "And—and I want it now worse than ever before!"

'At that she drew in her breath with a little sharp inhalation, and there was something like fear in her eyes—those brave, true eyes that had always been so fearless.

'In a moment we were on our feet, facing one another, and her hands were in mine. I knew then, I know now, that I might have kissed her—that she would have suffered it, partly because she was sorry for me, partly because she liked me, partly because she was grateful to me—and the bare thought set all my young blood running redder in every vein. But . . . it would have hurt her; she would have given me something she could never take

back, and later she might have known regret. Besides, I asked for no payment for the service of body and soul that I had given her so willingly, so gladly.

‘Instead I stooped and kissed her hands.

“Goodbye and God keep you!” I said, and turning left her.

‘That, I know now, was my greatest moment of all—a moment that might so easily have been spoiled, for her, for me!’

‘So now instead I have my memories—memories of things done, and one priceless memory of a thing left undone; and now, as I sit here waiting for the end, they give me all I ask of happiness and of contentment.’

‘But you must have got plenty of *kudos* for keeping that district quiet at such a difficult time,’ I remarked.

‘*Kudos?*’ he queried. ‘Oh dear, no! You see, mine was one of the districts which had no Mutiny history, and there were heaps of them—heaps of them!’

*AN ENGLISH POET.*

THE poet cried, ' I am obsessed,  
 And out of joint I find the times ;  
 Silent the Muse within my breast,  
 And lost my Dictionary of Rhymes.'  
 With that he bought an A B C,  
 And caught a train at ten to three.

And ere the sun had made the round  
 Of Neptune's wash and Tellus' ground,  
 He lay full-fed on a sunny bank,  
 Where trees were leafy and grasses rank,  
 And meads were lush and berries ripe,  
 And filled and lit a favourite pipe,  
 And said to himself, ' I'll dream all day  
 On a bank where the time is whiled away.'  
 Then, wooed by the sound of babbling streams,  
 Fair visions thronged from the land of dreams ;  
 They came to plague, but remained to bless  
 His mind's subliminal consciousness.

The first was a maid with olive skin,  
 Dark hair looped up with a silver pin,  
 And night-black eyes, and an oval chin.  
 She spake to the poet : ' Wild thyme is sweet,  
 But don't let it grow beneath your feet ;  
 Rise up, rise up, and follow me  
 To the banks of distant Italy :  
 For Italian skies and streams are blue,

And the shepherd pipes to the happy hills,  
 And sings that his love has proved untrue—  
 In the way that loves so often do—  
 And that love, after all, is for the few,

And is only one of the minor ills.  
 So rise, my friend, and follow me  
 To the land where hearts and morals are free,

And thee will I show  
 How the white lilies grow  
 On the banks of distant Italy.'

But the poet said, ' Though the streams be blue,  
 There are marshes, I've heard, and malaria too ;  
 And though you boast of your cloudless skies,  
 I understand there are clouds—of flies ;  
 And as for Italian shepherds' morals,  
 It wasn't in ethics I earned my laurels ;  
 If hearts are free I will let them be,  
 And I will not go where the white lilies grow  
 (If the fact that you mention is really so)  
 On the banks of distant Italy.'

Italy passed ; and the next maid came,  
 And the poet immediately guessed her name ;  
 For she bore a harp, and her dress was green,  
 And her dusky hair made a shadowy screen,  
 And she walked with the grace of a royal race,  
 And Mr. Yeats would have called her Cathleen.  
 She spake, and her voice was sweet and soft  
 As a breeze in the eaves of an old hay-loft :  
 ' Know'st thou the land where mists are drawn  
 O'er the face of eve and the face of dawn,  
 Where the wild hill sleeps as the wide mist creeps,  
 And weeping wakes and waking weeps ;  
 Where the maids are picturesquely dressed,  
 And their cheeks are caressed by the wet south-west ;  
 Where the pig in the bog for potatoes digs,  
 And the people partake of potatoes and pigs ;  
 Where, twilight and noon, the old wives croon  
 Of the land that lies beyond all eyes,  
 East of the sun and west of the moon ?  
 I do be thinking,' the maiden said,  
 ' 'Tis easy sailing from Holyhead.'

And the poet cried, ' I have often sailed  
 For the land of Erin, " where all has failed " ;  
 And the breeze that brushes  
 The maidens' cheeks



As they go cutting rushes  
 On Macgillicuddy Reeks,  
 And the mists and potatoes and pigs, as you say,  
 Are doubtless excellent things in their way ;  
 But, though an impartial unprejudiced man,  
 I hold by the proverb of *μηδὲν ἄγαν*,  
 Finding the pleasures of Ireland pall  
 When the Celtic twilight is over all :  
 Yes, *μηδὲν ἄγαν* is the song I sing,  
 A motto to which I intend to cling ;  
 For it's Old High Dutch for *not too much*,  
 Or *moderation in everything*.  
 And back to the land, where mists are drawn  
 O'er the face of eve and the face of dawn  
 Went Cathleen, daughter of Houlihaun.

Followed a hundred beautiful shades,  
 Their countries' representative maids ;  
 Bretons and Normans and Danes and Swedes,  
     Dancers of Spain with castanets,  
 The graceful shapes the Maremma breeds,  
     Turkish houris with cigarettes,  
 Dutch, Tyrolese, and Portuguese,  
 Flemish and Basque—O, a maiden-masque

Then, as the threads of sleep unravelled,  
 The poet awoke : and he cried, ' I have travelled  
 Far from the land where I was born,  
 Through the Ivory Gate and the Gate of Horn.  
 And whether it be that nut-brown stingo  
 That 's making me feel so remarkably jingo,  
 Or what it may be—I cannot explain—  
 But I'm truly relieved to be home again.  
 O maids, each one your country's queen,  
     Pretty or plain, and puny or plump,  
 Types of Beauty or Hygiene,  
     Depart, evade, excede, erump !  
 Begone, burnous, Zouave, and smock,  
 And frills that tickle the foreign taste :  
 I know a maid in a holland frock

With a touch of Cambridge blue at the waist,

Who would tramp with me through highland ling,  
Or moorland purples or midland greens,  
When storm-clouds break and east winds sting,  
Which would blow you chits to smithereens.  
Give me but a corner of English ground,  
And let me watch the endless round  
Of flower and fruit and blossom and seed  
In hill and valley and tilth and mead :  
Shower or sun suffices us,  
Or the march of the cirrho-cumulus,  
Or the rains that roar, or the winds that whelm,  
And the sun-dappled sward beneath the elm,  
And the noble oaks that Time so gnarls  
That the bumpkin says they hid King Charles ;  
And the daffodils and sweet blue-bells,  
And the wayside smells, and the dairy smells,  
With Tennyson's bees and doves in the trees,  
And rivulets hurrying through the leas.'

And the poet went back to the *Rose and Crown*,  
And dined on a pound of steak, washed down  
With a pint and a half of the true nut-brown,  
And in the morning returned to town.

F. SIDGWICK.

*THE IRISH REGIMENT UNDER NAPOLEON.*

EVERYBODY has heard of the Irish Brigade which, from the days of Sarsfield to the French Revolution, served so loyally under the Kings of France. But little is known, I think, of the similar organisation under Napoleon, or of the book in which its records are chiefly if not solely to be found. That is a pity, for the memoirs of Miles Byrne are delightful reading. His easy, garrulous narrative, revealing rather than displaying a fund of shrewd judgment, as well as high and chivalric spirit, has only one parallel in my knowledge—the autobiography in which Sir George Napier wrote down for the pleasure of his children what he remembered of the days when he and his more famous brothers fought under Wellington ‘for fun and glory.’

But there you strike a difference, and a sad difference. In the battles where Byrne and his brothers in arms were opposed to the Napiers, in the campaigns of which he shows us the alien side, Irish exiles took part from no choice of their own. They were banished men, turned from peaceable farmers into ‘war-dogs battered in every clime,’ by the unkindness of political destiny. Byrne himself was, in 1797, a young man of eighteen, who had just succeeded to his father’s large farm at Monaseed, where county Wexford borders on Wicklow. He took the oath of a United Irishman, blameless enough in wording, yet carrying with it undoubtedly a determination to make in Ireland such a revolution as England made when William of Orange landed; and when the Ancient Britons were turned loose on Wexford in April 1798, he went into hiding. Yet, had he lived guileless of conspiracy, like his uncle and his first cousin, he might, like them, have been strung up without trial at the door of his own home, while the women screamed vainly for mercy. At all events, he fought through the Wexford rising, escaped death and capture, and five years later, when Robert Emmet was planning his attempt to seize Dublin, Byrne was of his confederates. On the fatal night of July 23 everything miscarried. Byrne and his Wexford men, who were to have rushed one gate of the Castle, waited for the signal, which never came; they had no part with the disorderly mob which made

the name of rebellion hateful to many even of those who most sympathised with the cause for which Emmet was to give his life. A few days later the young leader returned secretly to Dublin, sought out Byrne, and commissioned him to carry to the leaders of the United Irishmen in Paris a confidential report for the French Government.

A friend persuaded the captain of an American vessel, which lay in the Liffey, bound for Bordeaux, to take the refugee, nominally as steward. Questions of passage money were deferred, but once at sea the Yankee demanded the singular sum of nineteen guineas—probably his conscience drew the line at twenty pounds. Two days out a cruiser overhauled them, and the skipper grew uneasy, but thought of a plan. Three of his hands having been inoculated had the pock on their faces, as if it had been the natural smallpox. They were ordered to bed, and the skipper at once brought them to the inspecting officer's notice, and begged for a doctor to be sent from the cruiser. Byrne, overhearing, was horrified, since he felt sure that the doctor would discover the true cause. But a short answer was given that the doctor had other things to do than mind waiting on Americans; and the officer cut his inspection very short, declining all proffers of hospitality. When he was gone, the astute Yankee explained that he had made his request, knowing it would not be complied with, but expecting to inspire confidence. 'After this,' says Byrne, 'I began to think he had more cleverness than I suspected at first.' The cleverness, however, was to show itself in a less gratifying form. Arrived in the river at Bordeaux, the captain was signalled to go aboard the flagship of the guard squadron, and slipped off without his passenger, who was naturally all eagerness to be in French keeping. Returning, he reported that his vessel would not be allowed up the river unless sailing from a friendly port, and consequently that he must run to Lisbon and back. However, a guard of French soldiers was on board, and when the boat came alongside to take them off, Byrne suddenly slipped down a rope into it. Some awkwardness followed, as he spoke no French, and was reduced to explanations by gesture. The first part of this was simple—to throttle a soldier who laid hands on him and throw him down; then he placed himself beside the sergeant, 'making signs to him the best way I could that I was under his charge till I reached the frigate.' Once there, his explanation was soon made, and the tables were turned. The Yankee was signalled on board, and the

commodore addressed him sharply, telling him that his god was traffic, that he had charged nineteen guineas instead of five pounds, and had wanted to extort nineteen more. With that he ordered the man to refund the money. 'But,' says Byrne, 'I thought if I took back this money it would be acting unhandsomely towards a man who, by his manœuvring with his pretended sick sailors when we were boarded, had probably saved my life.' And so he refused to profit, and the Yankee, after taking up his money again, parted from his passenger 'better friends than when I was leaving his vessel an hour before.'

At Bordeaux Irish friends were ready to send on the newcomer to his destination in Paris, where his first interview was with Thomas Addis Emmet, Robert's elder brother, then agent of the United Irishmen. The seal making his credentials was shown, and Emmet welcomed and befriended him. Soon the news of Robert Emmet's execution deprived Byrne of this friendship, as the Emmets moved out of Paris. But the town was full of Irish, some of them men who had been in the Brigade under Louis, some attached to the Irish College, many, like Byrne himself, recent fugitives or exiles. The scattered notes at the end of his memoirs throw much light on this curious colony, as well as on his own movements, in the days while he was pinching himself to live, studying hard at French, and watching with joy the construction of flat-bottomed boats for the invasion of England.

In those days, Byrne and his comrades hoped for speedy and glorious repatriation. Napoleon was still entertaining the project of a renewed descent upon Ireland, which, as the State Papers show us, the Irish Government had good reason to dread. Horse and foot were ordered to assemble at Brest and Rochefort, and at the same time—November 1803—a decree was issued for the formation of an Irish Legion, to be organised at Morlaix. Hither Byrne set out in December, tramping the distance on foot with a chosen comrade, Hugh Ware, who in 1797 was a land surveyor in Kildare, and in 1798 a chief of rebels. Arrested on suspicion, he lay in prison for three years, and, as Byrne tells us, devoted the time to a study of tactics. Released in 1801, the State Papers show him to us tramping across England and France in company with Michael Quigley, a mason (one of Emmet's chief associates), and afterwards unsuccessfully striving to earn money as a tutor. To such men as he and Byrne the chance offered by Napoleon's decree was doubly welcome. They received

temporary commissions, to be confirmed if their services proved desirable, pay to keep them—and the prospect of revenge. So they tramped gaily, while a more prosperous comrade, William Lawless, sometime a surgeon in Ireland, afterwards a general in the army of Napoleon, brought down their portmanteaus with his own baggage.

The 'Legion,' when it gathered at Morlaix, was only the 'cadre' or skeleton of a military organisation. On March 31, 1804, it numbered (we read in the '*Projets et Tentatives d'Invasion*' published recently by the historical department of the French Staff) forty-nine officers and thirteen *sous-officiers*. But they worked at their drill with enthusiasm, and rejoiced when their quarters were moved to a little town, whence, from a hill overlooking it, they could see Brest harbour and the masts of the ships that were to carry them to Ireland. But Napoleon blew hot and cold on the project. In March he was for letting the thing *traîner en longueur*; in August all was despatch, and on the grand scale. So months ran into years, and nothing happened, except quarrels breaking into duels. In 1805 a refugee escaped from Ireland, telling how eagerly the expedition was still looked for. The man to whom he told his story explained that he himself was abandoning all hope, and taking ship for America. And presently officers of the Legion began to be drafted off eastward with detachments for the German frontier; and the Legion itself memorialised collectively to be employed on active service. On October 28, 1806, after the Jena campaign, Napoleon ordered it to march to Berlin, with its eagle—the only one entrusted to any foreign regiment in his armies. On the march eastward a curious incident befell. Verdun was a dépôt for English prisoners of war, and the Legion was quartered in a suburb, 'lest its presence might be disagreeable to those prisoners.' It was marched through the streets early, before daybreak, to the sorrow of men who would have wished to parade their green flag, with its inscription, 'The Independence of Ireland.' But as they marched the band struck up 'Patrick's Day in the morning,' and, says Byrne:

We could see many windows opened and gentlemen in their shirts inquiring across the street, in good English, what was meant by this music at such an early hour. 'Why damn it, Burke, you ought to know that air,' was answered from one window to another.

At Mayence, the Legion filled up, partly with Poles, partly with Irish, who in 1798 and 1799 had been sold by the English Govern-

ment to the King of Prussia to work in his mines, 'his agent going through the prisons in Ireland, and choosing the best and ablest young men.' These exiles had been drafted into the Prussian army when war with France broke out, and now, not unwillingly, as may be imagined, they changed into the ranks of a service which promised at least the hope that one day they would help to liberate their own country.

I disentangle a couple of traits of one of these recruits from Byrne's pages—where, it may be observed, there is small mention of the author's own exploits, but much concerning his comrades. In 1811 fifty men of the Irish, under Lieutenant Maloney, were sent from Montbeltran to bring in a convoy eight leagues over plain and mountain. Crossing the mountain range, Maloney met a French battalion which had been roughly handled by guerillas in the plain, and the officer in command urged him to return, 'saying he surely could not think of advancing with so small a detachment against five hundred men, all well mounted.' But Maloney, 'having a written order, thought he could not with honour return before he met the enemy,' and accordingly proceeded till he met them. Then, taking up a position among some rocks on the side of a hill, he defied attack. The guerillas, finding they could not draw him to the plain, filed off at nightfall into a small village close by; whereupon Maloney left his position, attacked while they were dispersed about the village, beat them out of it, barricaded all outlets, and defended himself all night, till at eight in the morning he was relieved by a regiment that had heard of the fighting. Maloney then continued his march, reached his destination, and, says Byrne, 'escorted his convoy back to Montbeltran with great *éclat*.'

The other story belongs to the 1813 campaign on the Elbe, when Maloney was in a battalion commanded by Ware, which was forming the vanguard of Davoust's army. It shall be given textually:

Whilst Commandant Ware and his battalion were at the château of Gartz, Captain Maloney, who with his company had been the last on duty of the battalion, received orders to march. He flew into a violent passion and remonstrated with the adjutant, saying he would not march out of his turn. But when one of his comrades informed him he was chosen by the commandant on account of the importance and danger of the mission, which was to prevent the enemy passing the Elbe in the night, Maloney instantly exclaimed, Ware was an excellent chief and showed his discernment in the orders he gave; and repaired without delay to the place assigned, just in time to have his men concealed and to allow the enemy to approach in their boat within pistol-shot, when he gave orders to fire on them. This unexpected attack made them abandon



their plan for that night though they were in great force. Captain Maloney had thus the honour of defending all the night this passage with his company alone.

At Landau a special welcome awaited the regiment, for their commanding officer, General Harty (named general by the Convention), had been in garrison there with Berwick's regiment of the Irish Brigade in 1792. The colonel, O'Mahony, a royalist, was actually marching his men across the Rhine, when Harty, then a captain, demanded where they were going, and being told 'To join our princes on the other side,' declared he would never desert his adopted country, harangued the whole regiment, and marched it back, with arms and baggage, to Landau, leaving the colonel to proceed with only three other officers.

From Landau to Boulogne, from Boulogne to Antwerp, from Antwerp to Walcheren, the Legion carried its eagle and its tambour-major—a Prussian, seven feet high, whom Byrne himself gleefully recruited at Spire. While they lay at Walcheren, in 1807, a battalion was detached to join Murat's army in Spain, but Byrne remained with the main body in Holland, and got as much fever as rendered him anxious to see the last of the Low Countries. In July 1808 his wish was granted, and he sailed with a second battalion for Spain, getting his brevet as captain. Here the Irish were ordered to make part of the army marching against Sir John Moore, but the news of Corunna stopped them at Burgos, and the Wexford men were disappointed of their chance to meet again the general who had fought against them in their own county. Yet, as Byrne is careful to say, Moore, unlike many others, came out of Ireland with a reputation for honour and humanity.

It would be tedious to go through the narrative of five years' Peninsular campaigning. Perhaps the most striking thing here, as throughout the book, is the strange medley of Irish soldiers of fortune. Ware met, in Flanders, Aylmer, one of his comrades in Kildare, who had enlisted in the Austrian service, and afterwards helped to enrol an Irish legion to fight for the independence of Spanish Southern America. In Spain, at a St. Patrick's Day feast of the Irish regiment, there would be not only themselves, but men of Walsh's and Berwick's regiments, once part of the Irish Brigade, but transformed into the 47th and 70th of the French line, which still proudly trace their filiation. There would be a Plunkett, Prussian-born, but the son of an Irish soldier naturalised in Austria; there would be Daltons, descended from men of the Irish

Brigades in Spain ; with many others, Irish-born or sons of Irish, but naturalised in France, and commanding in French regiments.

For the men of the Irish Legion—which was now transformed into the Irish Regiment, organised with four battalions and a *depôt*—promotion into a French regiment was impossible. They could rise only in their own ranks, and it was a grievance of theirs, most reasonably, that men from outside were promoted into the regiment. This angered them worse because these promotions were made by Clarke, Duc de Feltre, then Minister of War, whose father was Irish, and whose first service had been made in the Irish Brigade. He brought in, notably, Mahony, also a royalist of the Brigade, who had emigrated and actually served for a period with the English army in Egypt before he returned to France. Between this man and the Irish of republican sympathies there was bad blood from the first, and in the end the quarrel cost Byrne and his friends dear. But, for the most part, to meet an Irishman was to meet a friend, and one story in especial deserves to be remembered.

Byrne himself, marching from Astorga to Toro, was given charge of several Spanish officers, and was instructed to render the march as agreeable as possible to these prisoners of war. This he did the more willingly since among them was a Mr. Doran, whose uncle he had known in Dublin. Finding this gentleman out of health, he offered him his own horse ; but the prisoner, preferring to ride on a baggage waggon, was accordingly given in charge to the sergeant. When the rearguard arrived at Toro, Doran was missing, and Byrne felt much put about :

However—the story goes on—just as I was preparing to go to bed, Major Doran came to my room ; he wanted to apologise for having remained behind. Seeing he was distressed lest I should think badly of him, I said, ‘Major, you were not on parole, you had not pledged your word of honour.’ ‘No,’ he replied, ‘but could anything be more dishonourable than to have availed myself of my countryman’s kindness to me to escape, and to have him censured and injured on my account ?’

The chronicler records, with evident complacency, that Doran, proceeding under a French officer’s command, managed to escape with a comrade before they reached Burgos.

Astorga had been the field of glory for Byrne’s battalion. On April 19, 1810, Junot, general-in-chief, arrived on the scene, and ordered the town to be taken by assault. The breach was made, and a battalion of chosen troops was organised to mount it, Captain Allen’s company of *Voltigeurs*, consisting of 150 men, leading,

though not without dispute. Byrne's friend, Hugh Ware, claimed the right for his own company of Grenadiers, and pushed his claim into Junot's presence. 'To which the duke mildly replied: "Captain, have I not the right to order the dispositions for the attack? You will be with your battalion and its chief, FitzHenry, at the foot of the breach to assure our success. I have given this order knowing well I could count on you."' Ware retired, leaving Junot and Solignac to comment on the hardship which confined these brave men to promotion solely in their own regiment.

Meanwhile instructions were given to Allen, who divided his company into two sections, and marched at the head of the first. He had to pass more than two hundred yards in the open before reaching the foot of the breach, under the fire of 2,000 men. 'He, however, mounted it with such bravery and decision that when he arrived at the top he turned round and saluted the general and the army of above 30,000 men.' Then, dashing in, he promptly executed Junot's orders, which were to seize a house near the rampart and hold it so as to keep up the communication between the breach and the trenches; further, piling the soldiers' sacks for a defence, he held the line of the rampart against any bodies of the enemy that approached the breach; and so he continued till morning. The rest of the battalion, lying below during the night, and bringing up ladders to the breach, suffered heavily, believing, meanwhile, that Allen was certainly killed. But in the dark his orderly slipped out and reached Byrne with a request for something to drink, as there was no water to be had in the house. A detachment was ordered to bring in provisions, and charge of it was given to a young sub-lieutenant—Delany. He got in with his cargo, and out again, but had several men killed and wounded, and himself got a ball through the arm. Going to the place in the trenches where the surgeon was busy, he sat down on a bank, looking on quietly, till the surgeon, noticing him, requested him to return to his company, according to orders, which were to allow no one there but those needing wounds dressed.

'Well,' said Delany, 'I would thank you to examine my wound.' 'How!' exclaimed the surgeon. 'My positive instructions are to dress the officers' wounds first, and you have said nothing to me though you have been looking on there for more than half an hour.' 'Oh, I am in no hurry; the poor soldiers stood in more need of assistance than I did.'

He had his arm tied up, and, refusing to go into sick quarters, rejoined his company to be ready for the assault. Junot's comment, when he heard the story, was : ' What a pity such men have not a country of their own to fight for ! '

The general assault did not take place, since the garrison surrendered at daybreak. Allen was ordered, as a special mark of honour, to return from the town to quarters by the breach, at the head of the battalion, or what remained standing of it—150 men out of 900. For this feat Junot promised the captain his promotion to *chef de bataillon*, but before the promise had been made good this brilliant soldier—who had been one of Robert Emmet's chief associates—had the ill-luck to be captured by guerillas and carried into prison at Cadiz, where his comrades feared gravely that he might fall into English hands and suffer as a rebel. There is nothing that Miles Byrne records with such evident satisfaction as his ability to send Allen in his prison a bill for 1,000 francs, and his services in getting this comrade at last liberated by exchange. But the chance of promotion had gone by, all superior vacancies having been filled up, many of them by men who, having been born in France, were entitled to advancement in French regiments.

In 1812 Byrne, with the other officers and sergeants of the second battalion, was recalled from Spain, where they had fought through the trying advance which drove Wellington back to Torres Vedras, and the more trying retreat which followed. In the regimental dépôt at Bois-le-Duc the second battalion was filled up with 800 Germans and other foreigners, who had been in the Dutch service before Holland was declared part of France. As soon as the news of Moscow and its ensuing disasters reached Flanders, Lawless, then colonel of the Irish Regiment, wrote, in the name of all his officers, entreating to be employed in the Grand Army. The demand was granted, and by February 1, 1813, Byrne and his comrades of the second battalion (now commanded by Ware) set out, along with the first battalion under Tennant, by way of Hanover and Brunswick, to Magdeburg, where, as so often happened, an Irishman, O'Mara, was in command. The spring went in confused fighting along the line of the Elbe, of which I may extract one astonishingly picturesque incident :

Commandant Ware, who had been detached with his battalion on March 28 to Winsen on the Elbe, was ordered to fall back on Celles, in which town he had a brilliant combat with the Cossacks. The town being evacuated by order one night and the enemy allowed to take possession, in the morning they were attacked in the town and driven through it in great disorder. They set fire to a

wooden bridge over the Aller to cover their retreat, but Commandant Ware passed it on horseback through the flames with his battalion and beat them a great distance from the town, when he was ordered to return and had scarcely time to repossess the bridge before it was consumed. It was on this occasion that General Aubert took a great liking to the Irish Regiment. He was colonel of the 148th Regiment, and was present when Ware passed the bridge, and when the General observed that Ware pursued the enemy too far, Aubert said that he would wish to be able to make the same reproach to his officers, who were mostly Dutch, newly organised at Magdeburg.

With the last days of April Napoleon joined the army, and Byrne's ingenuous narrative enables one to realise how that presence was felt even throughout far-off quarters and outlying divisions. Lützen was fought while the Irish were still separated from their corps—the 5th, under Lauriston—but they were soon summoned, and reached the field of Bautzen in time for the second day's fighting. They had the honour to capture, late in the evening, the village of Wurschen, which gave its name to that day's battle; and here, while Byrne, with his grenadiers, was still driving out the Cossacks, Ney came upon them, recognised the officer for a veteran of the retreat from Torres Novas, and told him to halt his men, for the battle was won. Then, entering the château, the Marshal threw the first mattress he found on the floor, flung himself on it, and gave orders to the sentinels to let no one come near him. Meanwhile, Byrne and Ney's aide-de-camp were at search for provisions in the ransacked building. The cellar lured them with possibilities, and at last, 'by measuring and tracing,' they found out a secret compartment in which were several hundred bottles of Tokay. Ney, as soon as he woke, was apprised of this glad discovery, and instantly sent off for the other generals, along with the colonel of the Irish and the other company of Grenadiers. So that night passed pleasantly. There followed a week of hot pursuit after the retreating but unbeaten allies, and on May 25 the Irish happened luckily to be still under arms when a sudden swoop on General Maison's advance guard was made at nightfall by 20,000 of the enemy's cavalry. Most of the division was driven back, but the Irish held their position all night, and on the day following Napoleon, coming himself on the ground, ordered them to lead the advance. 'It was a glorious day for the Irish Regiment,' writes Byrne, 'to have the honour of making the vanguard of such an army, and under the eyes of Napoleon.'

Through Liegnitz and Lissa to Breslau, Puthod's division marched on conquering, and the 5th Corps was advanced from this latter

town when news came that was welcome at least to men worn out with battle.

I know—writes Byrne—that, for myself and all those who had made five campaigns in Spain without ever hearing the word ‘armistice’ mentioned, it sounded like magic in our ears. I can never forget the night when Commandant Ware and I were sleeping at our bivouack, in a cornfield four leagues from Breslau, when an aide-de-camp came to tell him that an armistice was concluded, and that the regiment was ordered to return to its camp at Breslau. In the morning, when I was awake, I began to say how sorry I was that my dream about the armistice was not true. Such was my state of exhaustion from want of sleep that I did not know what to believe in the matter, though I was listening to the aide-de-camp’s conversation with Commandant Ware.

During the brief six weeks’ truce, Ware and Byrne, with four others of the regiment, received from Napoleon the cross of the Legion of Honour, than which no distinction has ever been more coveted by soldiers. When war began again in August, with Austria added to the enemies of France, they made part of Puthod’s division, under Macdonald, in Silesia, opposed to Blücher; and Blücher, with a fine disregard for scruple, had occupied Breslau and Jauer during the armistice. The result was a tremendous and unexpected attack of his cavalry, whose brunt fell on the Irish Regiment outside Löwenberg. Three hundred men were killed, among them two of the new-made knights of the Legion of Honour. Two days later, again at Löwenberg, as the regiment, under Napoleon’s eyes, was forcing the passage of the river, Lawless, their colonel, had his leg shot off, and Ware succeeded to the command—Byrne, as senior captain, being put in charge of one battalion. On the 23rd they were again in the thick of it at Goldberg, and on the 24th General Puthod recommended Ware for the rank of colonel, and Byrne, with three others, for that of *chef de bataillon*, Lauriston strongly backing the recommendation.

But the lucky days of the regiment were done; for although Napoleon himself, with his dash on Dresden, had once more gained victory, in Silesia things were going very ill, and Puthod heard of Macdonald’s reverse before Jauer and Katzbach. He fell back on Löwenberg—always unlucky—only to find his retreat checked by the Bober in terrible flood. Here, with his division reduced to 6,000 men, he defended himself against the overwhelming forces ranged in a half-moon about him, till the last cartridge was fired.

And even then—says Byrne—when the fire of his division ceased, the enemy hesitated an instant before venturing to advance. All of a sudden at last, thirty thousand men ran forward on their prey, of whom none but those who knew how to swim could attempt to escape.



After crossing the torrent—which carried off the French General Scibil and his superb charger—they had to wade for half a mile through flooded fields under the enemy's fire. Of the division only about 150 got through. Among these were eight officers and thirty men of the Irish, with Ware at their head, and an ensign carrying the eagle.

There followed an incident which Byrne relates with his accustomed simplicity. St. Leger was one of the bravest of the officers, a powerful man who, in the attack made by Blücher's cavalry outside Löwenberg, saved the French General Vacherau by throwing him bodily over a farmyard wall; and his younger brother was in the regiment, and reported missing after the crossing of the Bober.

Captain St. Leger bore up against his painful anxiety with the stoic fortitude worthy of a hero; but he could not bear up with the scene that ensued. He, Commandant Ware and Captain Byrne, after their escape across the river, came to a suburb, to wait to rally the men of the Irish Regiment who might have crossed the river; when Lieutenant Lynch was seen coming along the street from the town. Commandant Ware asked him if there were any men still in the town. 'Yes,' he replied, 'but I could not get St. Leger to come with me till he got something to eat.' 'What?' said poor Captain St. Leger, 'my brother is not dead!' and, overwhelmed, he flung himself down on the ground, and was only relieved by a flood of tears.

The Irish Regiment had now virtually ceased to exist. Ware brought his remnant, with their eagle, to Bautzen, whence Napoleon, on his way to the relief of the Silesian army, ordered them back to their dépôt at Bois-le-Duc to collect their sick and wounded, and re-muster as best they could. They passed over the reeking field of Dresden, and at Leipzig picked up their maimed colonel, Lawless. The route by Münster and Graves was dangerous, for already clouds of Cossacks had spread before the allied armies, and Tillman, with his partisans, was abroad; but in October 1813 what was left of them struggled home to the dépôt.

Orders soon came down to have the regiment reorganised on a war footing; but disappointments were in store for its veterans. Puthod and Lauriston, who had recommended their promotion, were captives; the Duke of Feltre, all-powerful at the War Office, already began to feel royalist sympathies reviving. Mahony, his comrade of the older brigade, but a stranger to the regiment's exploits in the field, was named colonel to the exclusion of Ware. Then orders came to have the regiment filled up at Antwerp; and plenty of skirmishing was done by its officers escorting convoys in and out, while harassed by Bülow's army. At the



end of January 1814, the post of *gros-major*, or lieutenant-colonel, was given to an outsider, blocking all promotion in the regiment. Ware went to Paris to protest at headquarters.

His representations succeeded, and he was named to the post, Clarke's nominee being transferred elsewhere. The vacancy as *chef de bataillon* thus created was given to Allen. But meanwhile the regiment was shut up close in Antwerp, which nothing but Carnot's exertions had saved from surrender. Byrne's enthusiasm for this organiser of victory—greater than he expresses for any of the other historical personages who pass in his pages—was none the less because Carnot put Colonel Mahony under arrest for treasonable correspondence with the English.

But the end had come elsewhere. News of Napoleon's abdication arrived, and upon the proclamation of Louis XVIII. Colonel Mahony resumed command. Things grew more unpleasant when the colonel insulted one of his junior officers at a ball, and, being rebuked by Ware, ordered that officer under arrest. A duel followed, and after this promotion in the regiment went to certain Prussian officers now incorporated with it, from the *débris* of another *régiment étranger*. Then Napoleon escaped from Elba.

The view taken by the Irish officers was that they served France, and that, 'as foreigners, they should not meddle in the change of government, but serve faithfully the one established until released from their oath of allegiance.' Accordingly, they exerted themselves to keep their men in hand, but refused absolutely to join the enemies of France, and on March 20 conformed joyfully to the instructions transmitted by Mortier, which absolved the military by public act from their oath to Louis XVIII. The cherished eagle was brought out, and the regiment paraded in its quarters at Montreuil-sur-Mer—refusing, however, to serve under Colonel Mahony, who, after declaring that the road of honour led to the camp of King Louis, and setting out upon it, had returned to resume command. Moreover, with the eagle, they assumed again their designation of *régiment étranger irlandais*, which, in deference to the feelings of the Bourbon's allies, had been suppressed during the months of Elba.

Nevertheless, the regiment's career was ended. During the Waterloo campaign it was detailed off to protect the coast-line against a threatened diversion in the rear of Napoleon's army, and the news of Waterloo still found them at Montreuil-sur-Mer. Months of rancour, suspicion, and duellings between Irish and

Prussian officers of the regiment were ended at last in September by the disbanding of the Irish Regiment. The officers retired on half-pay, but not all were unmolested in the enjoyment of it. Allen was arrested by order of the Duke of Feltre, again Minister of War, and ordered to quit France without delay; and only Arthur O'Connor's intercession availed to save him from this second banishment. Jackson, another of the fighting captains, was less lucky, and suffered the same sentence without reprieve. He sailed from Havre to South America, whither more than one of these soldiers of fortune were forced to carry their swords. Town and Lawless, two other captains, were also exiled. In 1817 Byrne himself received a sudden order to quit France in fifteen days.

He and Ware, along with Allen and Hayne, had settled down at Tours, as a little half-pay colony of veterans in the prime of life; and here the bomb fell on him. Luckily, the general in command at Tours was able to give him an introduction to the Prince de Broglie, and through this influence he obtained sight of the charge sheet, where he was described as 'Buonapartiste enragé qui ne changerait jamais.' Luckily for him, the Duke of Feltre's star was on the wane, and after four months spent in Paris, by De Broglie's advice (in defiance of the order), he was formally reinstated on half-pay, and so remained till 1828. In that year a proposal was made to employ him and Colonel Corbet, another of the expatriated Irish, in the campaign for the liberation of Greece. Singularly enough, the English ambassador, Sir Charles Stuart, protested, and the Irish soldiers had to be hurried off to join the staff of General Maison before matters could go further. After assisting at the siege of the castle of Morea, Byrne was put in command of this important place. He was at Navarino when news arrived of the revolution of July 1830, and here he received his commission as *chef de bataillon* in the 56th Regiment of the line. With this regiment he saw something of civil war against the partisans of the Duchesse de Berri; but when France settled down peaceably under Louis Philippe he took his retirement in 1835, and made, among other friendships, a close alliance with M. Viaris, the father-in-law of Tourguenieff. His sober and healthy life lasted on till 1862, when a very singular link with the past was broken by his death.

STEPHEN GWYNN.

*SOME DIVERSIONS OF AN INDUSTRIAL TOWN.*

It was before the worst days came to our little town, whose cluster of tall chimneys points upwards to a sombre sky, beneath fine curves of grey northern hills. Ten years ago there was still a busy click-clacking of home-looms up and down many a steep, narrow street where ever since the sound has been growing fainter and fainter—like a heart that is ceasing to beat, so one cannot but feel as one passes through them now. Japanese and Continental competition have gradually hushed that cheery humming, and the people are sighing for Mr. Chamberlain's millennium, not because they trouble over-much about economic theories and principles, but because it is absolutely a matter of life or death to one fast-expiring industry. A small industry it is, but one which used to bring good, clean work under healthy conditions for good wages to thousands of men and women, many of whom could work at home as well as in the mills, in roomy cottages, whose rent would represent an attic or a cellar in great cities. Is there a better philanthropy than to provide a community with the means of living cleanly, honestly, and comfortably by the fruit of their own steady labour? Surely not, but when an industry tends towards becoming a philanthropic enterprise its doom is pronounced, for sufficiently obvious reasons. Large issues, however, do not concern us here, nor would I attempt the elegy of quenched furnaces and rusting shuttles, though surely these possess a stern poetry of their own. I would rather recall merrier things, and above all certain large-hearted hospitalities of a peculiarly characteristic kind which marked the age of local prosperity and died hard with it.

Entertainments given by the richer to the poorer, the landlord to his tenants, the employer to the employed, are common enough everywhere, but it is, to say the least, unusual—at any rate south of the Trent—for such an invitation to be returned. This was sometimes the case, however, in prosperous days in the little north country town of which I write; and more whole-hearted hospitality it would be difficult to find than that of some hundreds of working people towards their guests of the evening. To be the principal guests of such an entertainment was indeed no light matter, for

the ordinary limits of time, physical capacity, and similar trifles were swept away by the zeal and energy with which the enter-tainers devoted themselves to the work in hand.

It was about the New Year (Christmas is decidedly at a discount in many northern manufacturing districts) that a large card arrived bearing an invitation to a festal gathering in a big public hall on a certain day. Soon after four o'clock accordingly, certain persons were ushered into a scene of revelry, where many long tables were spread for a substantial feast, and a gay multitude of rainbow blouses predominated largely over the more sober array of the other sex which was even then decidedly overmatched in the factories where it has now almost entirely yielded place to ours. The heads above the blouses have bristled for days and nights past with curling-pins, and are now borne proudly under the stiffest and crinkliest of haloes. The usual number of babies make themselves heard at intervals, and are treated alarmingly to snacks of currant bread and butter and drinks of tea.

The whole entertainment moves forward with that organised and melancholy precision which is so characteristic of northern working people. Nothing has been left to chance and nothing overlooked, as would be the case in any ordinary southern local gathering. Here an austere efficiency pervades even the entry of the tea-urns, immediately after the arrival of the guests, and the orderly marshalling of the company to many tables proceeds without any outward sign of hilarity or enthusiasm. It takes long, indeed, before the rigid faces relax at all from their normal expression of somewhat defiant reserve. At one table alone a giddier spirit immediately prevails, and sounds of unhallowed mirth break upon the rigidity of the atmosphere. It presents a curious spectacle.

Strong and stout, or thin and wrinkled, those grey-haired free-lances, the old warpers and winders, have pursued their invariable holiday practice, and have chosen one elderly representative of the male sex to grace each side of their own special table. The amount of attention lavished upon those greatly daring individuals might have daunted feebler spirits. Still powerful elbows emphasise time-honoured jokes; on each side they are the mark for an artillery fire of well-seasoned pleasantries, indulgent gibes, and all the rough, homely witticisms of a generation which is now, alas! dropping out fast, and too often ending its days in the workhouse, owing to the changes which have gradually reduced their sphere of labour

almost to vanishing-point. The boisterous spirits of this older generation mark a gulf in manners between two social epochs. The self-contained young people at the other tables, still unthawed by tea-pots and currant delicacies, look coldly upon the revellers who possess so inexplicable an attraction for their guests. The contrast has a deep underlying significance. It really, I am convinced, marks a progress in gentler manners and even in higher aspirations; yet it was impossible not to turn with relief from a somewhat chilling decorum to the rude Doric mirth of those jovial grandmothers of our superior young women in the rainbow blouses.

Meanwhile tea has drawn to an end. Sampson, small of stature, wizened of countenance, with beady twinkling eyes, is released from the pressure of his numerous female admirers on either side. Sampson seldom relaxes into a smile, but his tongue is admitted to be a match even for the ancients of days amongst the warpers. Aaron, good-humoured giant, on the opposite side of the table, the special and cherished butt for their wit, rises carefully; an unwary movement on his part in those cramped quarters might send half a dozen of his oppressors flying. With the speedy disappearance of tables, a rising temperature, and an atmosphere in which fumes of tea, pork pies, orange peel, and hot humanity strive for the mastery, the chill of etiquette is less sensibly felt; spirits rise, and we settle down for the evening's entertainment opposite a raised stage in quite a hum of general conversation, while screws of paper containing sweets and other delicacies are brought out from the pockets of the younger girls and generously passed round.

The programme is long, very long. Whosoever—man or woman—has a song, must sing it. 'An excellent good song—would it were done!' is a sentiment which evidently has a tendency to grow general after the first hour or two. There are recitations, moreover, and here and there an aspiring male, discarding song or recitation, delivers himself of a speech. Good speeches they are for the most part, the average of public speaking being very high in north country industrial towns, astonishingly so when compared with the inarticulate habit of the daily life. But at last the chief performance of the evening sets in. Various properties are brought in and arranged upon the stage—a deal table covered with a blue and red cotton cloth, a chair or two, a stand with saucepans on one side helps to complete the scene; we soon realise that we are looking

at a farmhouse kitchen. An original drama is now unfolded, its authorship being wrapped in mystery. The stout farmer's wife appears with her fair daughter, who is left in charge of the house while the mother makes a distant expedition to the market in our town. She apparently addresses many injunctions to the maiden, mingled with certain warnings, not immediately comprehensible to the uninitiated spectator from the south (*i.e.* south of the Trent), but presently to become so. As a matter of fact, this conversation presents an interesting study in shades of local dialect, and of intonation which plays so large a part in dialect; for the mother speaks with the tongue of the farm-folk, a sparse population scattered in lonely farms about our bleak hills, while the daughter replies in the speech of the town mill-hand. Now, these people are two distinct species who seldom mingle at all, and have but a poor opinion of one another. An opportunity for such comparison between them is therefore rare and difficult to account for here, until it is ascertained on inquiry that the part of the mother is played by a weaver whose tastes led her away from her own people in the solitary little farm far away in the hills down to the sociable warmth and companionship of the factory, where labour is limited to working hours, and the everlasting requirements of live stock and dairy are not perpetually calling away youth and age alike from scanty rest and rare pleasure.

On the departure of the admonitory mother enter a stalwart young man, who instantly proceeds to urge the cause of love and deserving poverty in splendid periods. He is reminded, not without agitation, that stern parents have forbidden him to aspire to the hand of their sole hope and heiress on account of his lowly position, and the heroine dismisses him from behind her handkerchief. The disconsolate wooer's next proceeding is somewhat mysterious, for instead of retiring by the natural exit, he proceeds to fit himself, with considerable difficulty, under the inadequate table, from whence his extremities are plainly visible. Unconscious of this strange conduct, the heroine turns to the saucepans, and is understood to be preparing the family dinner. An amazing person now appears upon the scene, a lanky, shuffling object with a shock of red hair and a startlingly cadaverous countenance. He is arrayed—heaven save the mark!—in a dress-suit, with a large red silk handkerchief protruding from his attenuated waistcoat; time—before eleven o'clock in the morning! The conversation which ensues remains—so far as his share is concerned—wholly



incomprehensible to the guests of the evening, who puzzle in vain as to what variety of speech those atrociously mincing, mouthing accents can represent, and why so obnoxiously affected and high-pitched voice should be assumed and maintained. It soon appears, however, from the young lady's growing alarm and indignation, that he is delivering himself of nefarious proposals; his wooing is not *pour le bon motif*, so we learn from the burst of eloquence in which she spurns him with sentiments gloriously worthy of the humble but virtuous heroine of the legitimate drama. The climax follows swiftly: she points magnificently to the door, he stands his ground. A robust shriek of alarm brings the discarded wooer from his opportune post under the table, the villain in the dress-suit fares badly, and is given a violent exit; the parents return, and the curtain is rung down upon appropriate blessings as the reward of valour and virtue.

Curiosity and bewilderment impel an incautious question. A dress-suit is doubtless the recognised costume in which a villain worthy of the name would naturally array himself when he gets up in the morning, but what can be the meaning of those impossibly finicking accents of which only an occasional word is recognisable? Retribution swiftly overtakes the inquirer. 'What may a' be? Why a's the wicked duke, and what doost a' talk—well, well now—same as your own sen', o' course!'

Such was the answer of one of the astonished hosts. It was really staggering! If to see yourself as others see you is a shock, it is doubly so to hear yourself as others hear you! Not even the delicate compliment conveyed by ducal association can restore self-respect after watching and listening to that grotesquely gibbering, mincing creature 'same as your own sen'!'

The entertainment had now been in progress for a good five hours. When dancing set in presently the guests of the evening withdrew, but not until it had been necessary to encourage several still coy and backward gentlemen who had begun to gyrate with one another for lack of courage to approach the now laughing and derisive phalanx of brilliant blouses. The second polka, however, inaugurated a better state of things, and the world bade fair to move merrily until midnight.

The possibility of such an evening, the remembrance of its true hospitality, and of the strenuous effort of those factory workers who provided for their guests all entertainment of their own, wholly free from any roughness in its merrymaking, and innocent of all



suspicion of coarseness in its mirth, brings a regretful pleasure with it. Regret for the passing of a fine industry productive of clean and prosperous working lives in a healthy country town; pleasure that such relations—of which this is only one small example—can exist in our country between employer and employed. Long may they continue in all our workshops! Our foreign rivals are proving too powerful for this particular manufacture, but there is a dark and threatening shadow drawing more and more closely round most continental centres of industry. There is talk of Socialism here, and of many rights and wrongs, yet with us time is bringing its changes gently to pass with no undue haste; but of the menace hanging over other countries, of disastrous war between classes, of real hatred and of bloodshed, what do we know? When I remember a visit paid to certain sunlit Piedmont workshops and the vision of long rows of faces, many of them beautiful with the beauty of the Raphael or Luini Madonnas, but quickly to be changed into the likeness of others, haggard, aged, terrible, I turn thankfully to the harsher features which look up always with a welcome from each loom or sewing-machine in our bleak, unlovely town. The progress down those Italian factory rooms was a revelation; the faces that glanced up at our coming with their task-master darkened one after the other into scowling resentment as the shadow of the passing group fell upon them—the shadow of hardship, of oppression, of endless slavery for the scanty reward of infinite weariness. The reason seemed not far to seek, afterwards, when watching the payment of the poor wages, and listening to all the hard fines and forfeits for every small defect and failing which yet further diminished them. Outside the sunlight of God was resting upon a heaven of lake and mountain, of laden vines and fruitful earth; beautiful young faces were passing by still unspoiled by that hard youth-destroying toil within, which reconciled English visitors then and for ever to the self-respecting conditions of life and labour in which our own hard-featured, slow-tongued workers earn comparative ease and comfort under the gloomy sky of a northern English manufacturing district.

MABEL C. BIRCHENOUGH.

*THE DISEASES OF  
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.*

BY S. G. TALLENTYRE.

THERE are two subjects which, it is said, always interest—health and money.

An age which loves discussing its diseases in season and out of season, which finds ‘a comparison of itises’ one of the most delectable topics of dinner-table conversation, and the detailed account of the last new complaint an irresistible item for a popular periodical, should surely discover entertainment in the vagaries of maladies and remedies of one of the most remarkable periods of medical treatment in history—the eighteenth century.

It is, of course, the merest truism to say that since that time medicine has undergone a revolution, to which the French Revolution in the world social was child’s play. The very attitude towards disease has changed. The simple plan of allowing it to run its course, and Nature to work out her own salvation under the most favourable of possible conditions, was then never even dreamt of. Doctors and patients alike looked on pain, not as a salutary indication of some violation of natural laws, to whose warning the wise will certainly attend, but as a totally unprovoked and malignant enemy. If a disease attacks you, attack it. Bombard it with pills, deluge it with drugs, suffocate it, plaster it, blister it, bleed it, until one or other of the combatants retires vanquished from the fray. Of course it was inevitable that some of the missiles intended for the sickness should hit the sick person. ‘The man recovered of the bite, the dog it was that died.’ The feeble voice from behind the curtains of the four-post bed—that happiest hunting-ground of the microbe—pleading for air or water was always taken to be, not the voice of the patient’s nature, but of the vicious longing of his disease. The invariable rule was, when he gasped for breath, to draw the curtains tighter and seal the windows yet more hermetically; when he burnt with fever, to heap on the blankets;

when he begged for water, to give him nothing to drink ; when he refused food, to stuff him with it ; to take a request to sleep as an infallible sign that he ought to be kept awake, and a request to be washed as the solemn token that soap and water would be fatal.

But Nature was not only disregarded *in* disease, but some of her best gifts were universally assumed to be the fruitful cause *of* disease. The medical treatises of the age are full of sad examples of Young Ladies of Beauty, Fortune, and Great Merit, who, on the eve of being married, 'went to bed perfectly well and woke up stone dead' of 'an inflammatory sore throat caught by a night air,' while the Young Gentlemen of Parts and Breeding who died from Inadvertently leaving open their bedroom windows during the night, can only have been exceeded by the number of young gentlemen who must have died from advertently keeping them shut. A clergyman in Essex seriously attributed the great mortality in his county to people getting up too early and inhaling noxious morning airs. All air, in fact, was noxious—except the air of the room where, with its windows very often not made to open, you had slept all night, and been through all the complaints incidental to your path in life. One bold doctor, indeed—quite unconsciously Irish—did recommend that a bed-chamber should be 'well ventilated in the day as it is principally occupied in the night'; and another, Adair, far in advance of his age and wholly unattended to, positively dared to suggest in print the benefit that those who 'labour under catarrhal coughs, which often terminate in consumption,' would derive from sleeping in a pure atmosphere.

Charlotte Elizabeth, Princess Palatine and mother of the Regent of France, who was in most matters medical singularly shrewd and unconventional, roundly asserted, in 1712, that the Dauphin had died 'from close air and grief.' Certainly, a few years later, she boldly announced of Madame de Maintenon that 'the anger and disappointment she felt at losing all hope of reigning with the Duc du Maine, turned her blood and gave her the measles,' . . . and that then 'a terrible storm arose and drove in the eruption and finally stifled her'; while she was also responsible for the remarkable story of an old lady 'who was found dead in bed,' suffocated 'by her own fat, which had melted from the great heat.' But it was Charlotte Elizabeth who saved at least one little Prince of the Blood from the measles, the nine doctors

the enormous doses of wine, the blood-letting, and the violent medicines which had already killed his brother; and infuriated the faculty by treating all childish complaints ever after with warmth, rest, cooling drinks—and success.

Many of the ills to which flesh is subject, which the doctor and patient of the eighteenth century could not attribute to too much air, they set down to too much washing. Yet, 'hands often, feet seldom, head never,' was the well-kept rule of ablutions in those days. The outrageous Adair, indeed, went so far as to say that invalids 'ought to bathe their feet in warm water once a week'; and 'when it can be conveniently done, use a moderately warm bath once a month.' But these were counsels of perfection indeed, and nobody took any notice of them.

The real causes of suffering, as opposed to the fictitious ones of air and cleanliness, are not far to seek. The terrible sanitary conditions in which people lived were, of course, the main reason of much of their ill-health, and are a part of serious medical history which cannot now be touched. There were other potent social causes too. When Montesquieu said that dinner killed one-half of the Parisians, and supper the other half, he might have spoken for London as well. When one thinks of the succession of heavy meats, of the capons and the boars' heads, the luscious pasties, the creams, stuffings, and mincemeats which the ladies of the family spent all their time and ingenuity in devising, one is tempted to rejoice that such domesticity is indeed a lost art, and to think that to the incapacity of the modern cook and to the indifference of the modern housekeeper is owing no little part of such health and spirits as one has. And then the world not only ate so enormously and so injudiciously, but so often! The terrible breakfast, with small beer and table groaning with large meats, precluded, indeed, a lengthy mid-day meal. But by three or four o'clock great-grandpapa and grandmamma were feeding again. As late as the early Victorian period this fearful repast embraced about twelve courses, all enormously heavy and indigestible, and, so far as possible, put on the table together, so that the diner could see his troubles in front of him, and know the worst at once. Does the present age quite realise that when its forefathers had sat, perhaps, three hours over this meal, drunk steadily for two or three more, and taken a dish of tea with their womenkind, the whole party then *returned* to the dining-room and had a supper on the cold remains of the dinner? No wonder that

Addison wrote that 'the apothecary is perpetually employed in countermining the cook and the vintner.' No wonder that people who were famous for longevity were also famous for a peculiar abstinence, that the octogenarian Horace Walpole made a cult of 'cold water and starvation,' and the more than octogenarian Voltaire of small cups of black coffee and dry bread.

In such an age it is scarcely surprising to come across in that very quaint old work, 'The English Malady, or a Treatise of Nervous Diseases of all Kinds,' by Dr. George Cheyne, an instance of 'a Young Lady who had by a Mal-Regimen and too strong and high Food while at a *Boarding School* at London, fallen into Hysterick Disorders of all the Forms and Shapes ever observed or described'; or to find such disorders, which, as will be seen, were extraordinarily common, constantly attributed by this wise man to 'lusting after Foreign Delicacies' and eating when one had 'Inappetency' for food. To be sure, as Dr. Cheyne said, most of his patients offered 'doughty objections' to the vegetable diet he suggested as a cure, and preferred 'Death with a Bounce' to life on such starvation conditions as he proposed.

But if over-eating slew its thousands, over-drinking slew its tens of thousands.

An enumeration of the celebrated men of the eighteenth century whose health was ruined, whose careers were spoilt, and who, as Horace Walpole put it, 'reeled into the ferry-boat' thirty or forty years before Nature bade them embark, would serve as a powerful illustration for the propagandist of total abstinence, but is one he rarely or never uses. With a few exceptions, neither the precept nor the example of the faculty made for temperance. Dr. Tronchin, indeed, the enlightened physician of the Continent, preached cold water as well as fresh air; and that bold Dr. Cheyne cautioned the fair against attempting to cure vapours by 'drinking a bottle heartily every day.' His view of strong drink was that it had been invented by Heaven 'to shorten the *Antediluvian Length of Life* in order to prevent the *excessive Growth of Wickedness*.' But he found few to agree with him. One medical gentleman, in a very popular treatise, which went into a fourth edition in 1818, and was designed to show the best means of attaining longevity, recommended three moderate-sized glasses of wine after dinner, when 'half a pint to a pint' had been taken at dinner; and permitted as a zest to social intercourse 'half a bottle to a bottle of generous wine.' Yet this

Sinclair considered himself, and was considered, a very temperate man. Few of his fashionable brethren were so abstemious.

'You had better take no more wine,' says Steele one night, at the Kit-Cat Club, to the celebrated Garth, physician, poet, *bon-vivant*, of whom it was said that no doctor ever understood his art more or his trade less, 'but go and see your poor devils of patients.' 'Tis no matter,' answers Garth, already half-seas over, 'if I see them or not. Nine have such bad constitutions that all the doctors in the world can't save them; and the other six have such good, that all the doctors in the world can't kill them.'

One Brown, who was an excellent type of the charlatan physician of his time, the 'dear doctor' of the fashionable woman, made a point of recommending 'sugar and spice and all that's nice' to everyone, whatever their malady. A hypochondriacal patient, for instance, was to drink 'a glass of wine in the forenoon from time to time,' 'several glasses of port or punch after dinner till some enlivening effect is perceived from them, and a dram after everything heavy.' 'The company of amiable, handsome, and delightful young women' was also recommended to cheer the spirits of this dismal gentleman. Plenty of amusement and all the eatables and drinkables the patient likes best, were, indeed, Brown's principal prescriptions. If he was not popular and rich, he certainly ought to have been.

These cheering bottles, 'hogsheads of October, kilderkins of small beer, barrels of cider, and bowls of punch'—not to mention what the *Spectator* called 'sips, drams, and whets without number'—were, of course, the immediate progenitors of the gout. That complaint, from which the noisiest sufferers now are old gentlemen on the stage, or which is, at any rate, much less widespread and terrible than it used to be, even within living memory, was in the eighteenth century a rampant epidemic among the upper classes. Everybody who was anybody always had it. If you had not brought it on yourself, your fathers would certainly have brought it on you; so not to suffer from it proved you beyond denial meanly temperate or without an ancestry. Horace Walpole's letters are full of it; and he is one of the few people who succeeded in making it amusing. For it he lived 'like an anchorite,' or took seas of liquid medicines, mountains of pills, and bins of powders. 'I have tried hot medicines and cold, warmth and air, humouring it and contradicting

it; water, ice, wine, brandy, and fruit; and have thought by turns that all of them did me good and did me hurt.'

Certainly, as a fashionable disease, 'that alderman distemper' has passed away. But there were other complaints, too, of that century of which this knows little, and as undoubtedly fashions in maladies as there are fashions in clothes. What has become, for instance, of the 'miliary fever' from which Walpole's duchesses and marchionesses suffered so universally, or of the 'anatomical fever' recorded in the smug 'Journals of Mrs. Papendiek,' for which the patient was treated by having his nostrils bathed with port wine and the same balm generously 'poured down his throat with a quill'? Does anyone suffer now from such inflammations of the eyes as can be cured by drinking a pint of sea-water on the beach every day before breakfast?—a remedy successfully adopted by Mrs. Papendiek, clad in a panoply of faith in her medical adviser and a green silk poke-bonnet. The three doctors of Louis XIV. drew up in a 'Journal' a list of maladies suffered by that monarch, which were only less marvellous than the remedies they gave him to cure them. One is left wondering how he lived so long, and how he allowed his physicians to. The Early Victorian fainting fits, which only really went out with the crinoline, and seem to have been one of beauty's best-worked attractions for the opposite sex, were but the children of those 'spleens, vapours, and hysterical distempers' which rendered women such a nuisance in the eighteenth century.

Every woman who did not wish to expose herself to a charge of strong-mindedness was afflicted, and afflicted her friends, with these maladies as a matter of course. Sometimes they took the forms of 'Fits of Screaming, Fidgeting, Peevishness, Discontent, Ill-Humour, Yawning, and Stretching,' a condition for which the sufferers no more held themselves responsible than for an attack of chicken-pox, or which they ascribed solely to over-indulgence in coffee, tea, chocolate, and snuff. One English doctor at least told them point blank that 'Health and Life are too strong Forts' to be taken or destroyed by such 'Popgun Artillery' as that, ascribed their disease to luxury and idleness, and bade them ride on horseback, play at shuttlecock, and avoid the lying in bed which some of the faculty recommended as a cure. Tronchin abroad ordered the fine ladies to polish their floors, mind their children, and go for country walks in the short skirts he had himself invented, which were called Tronchines.



But it will be easily seen that, as a fashion, the complaint was far too convenient to be lightly cast aside. A bore comes to call—Madame would be delighted to see him but for her wretched Spleen! Duty bids her get up and look after her household on these wretched, cold, murky winter mornings; but, rightly cautious of her health, she lies cosily in bed drinking ‘Chamomile tea for the Hyp.’

Queen Anne set the seal of fashion on the thing by having it herself, and was doctored for it with a dreadful nostrum called Raleigh’s Cordial, which afterwards helped to kill Caroline, the wife of George II., and did its best to destroy Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. ‘Nerves, madame, nerves!’ was the approved medical solution of every unhealthy condition; and the fashionable physician had always on his tongue a dozen instances of ‘Ladies of Great Fortune in this town, eminent for their Beauty, Parts and Fine Breeding,’ who had made the complaint aristocratic.

The poisoning from the white lead with which women doctored their complexions was another disease which has passed away; though, to be sure, the follies still committed for the sake of appearance are so many and sometimes so fatal that the twentieth century is in no position to cast stones at the eighteenth. Lady Coventry, once one of the beautiful Gunnings, died of the habit, ‘from which nothing could break her.’ ‘My Lady Harrington’s eldest daughter is at the point of death,’ from the same idiocy. The modern girl who said she preferred extinction to sandy eyebrows had indeed many prototypes in her grandmothers. But while their follies were in part, at least, the result of want of knowledge—‘we talk gruel and anatomy with equal fluency and ignorance’—she can scarcely offer so sound an excuse.

Another disease peculiar to the eighteenth century was that termed with delicious vagueness ‘a fever.’ The modern practitioner, who is required to be much more explicit, may well envy a doctor who satisfied everybody by that elastic pronouncement. Is Charles thickly covered in a rash, or has Betsy come out in boils? A fever. A complaint which involves a cold in the head and a couple of days indoors, or one which is fatal after weeks of misery and medicines? Equally, a fever. Typhus or typhoid, scarlet or gastric, non-contagious or violently infectious—there is not the slightest need to enter into trivial details like that! If after two or three days ‘a fever’ resolves itself into *the* smallpox—well, it *was* a fever to begin with; and with a nod, as useful and as

pregnant as Lord Burleigh's, the family physician easily conveyed to the patient's friends that he knew it all along, only kept the knowledge to himself for their sakes.

The specific fevers of those days, the spotted and the jail, the universal horrors of smallpox and scurvy, are to be met with in every history and need no amplification here.

That so very few people attempted any kind of disinfection is to be partly accounted for by the fatal, fatalistic belief of too many of them that disease was directly sent by heaven, and that to oppose it with fresh air, soap and water, and isolation was to fly impiously in the face of Providence. The only thorough disinfection met with in a long study of eighteenth-century memoirs was the burning of the wing of the château in which Voltaire had confluent smallpox—and that, of course, was an accident. What a fine field of operation the microbes of a hundred diseases must have found, not only in the rich, thick curtains and heirloom carpets of bedrooms in which sunshine and fresh air were rigorously tabooed for their 'fading' and 'rotting' propensities, but in the handsome shawls and costly stuff petticoats in which grandmamma peeled from scarlet fever and nursed her family through smallpox, and then kindly handed down to her descendants! One can only hope and surmise that the germs, becoming too numerous for their own comfort, fell into civil war and destroyed each other.

But if our grandfathers looked askance on disinfection, not so on other remedies. Remedies! The age was mad on them. The only thing it could not do, when attacked by the least of passing maladies, was to do nothing. Madame had her household medicine chest—in which, indeed, it may be conceded, the drugs were generally harmless, if ineffectual, but with which she dosed, with alarming readiness, not only herself and her children, but her visitors, her servants, her dogs, her cats, and her poor. 'I have gone through every receipt in "The Complete Huswife" ten times over,' groans Tony Lumpkin to Mrs. Hardcastle, 'and you have thoughts of coursing me through *Quincy* next spring.'

Sometimes these home medicaments and Nature in combination, or perhaps in opposition, had results so good that professional assistance could be dispensed with. It is certainly not wonderful that the doctor was much less readily called in for small ailments than he is now. When one considers his fearful zeal to be up and at it, the rows of black draughts on the mantelpiece, the piled-up pillboxes, the loathsome concoctions recommended as

foods, and the insane passion of all the faculty for bleeding, it is easily understood that only the courage of desperation made the wretched patient take 'a course of nonsense and advice' at last.

The bleeding has become comedy—as well as history. To be 'blooded' before he went a journey or made his will, to cure him equally of being too fat or too thin, when he was disappointed in the result of a lottery ticket or too elated by its success, because it was the springtime or because it was not—a man expected this remedy with an expectation that was never disappointed. Louis XIV. was bled 'generously' (the adjective is his doctors') nine times in the scarlet fever. Bleeding killed alike the Duchesse de Trémouille, in 1709, and her husband, who was bled to death, to console him for her loss. When the mob attacked the Duke of Bedford's house in 1765, the doctors remedied the outrage by bleeding the Duchess the next morning. When George Selwyn, at Lord Coventry's, fell against a marble table and cut his head open, a surgeon rushed at him and bled him at once, though, to be sure, Nature was already doing it herself.

'A lingering hecick' and an apoplexy were alike treated by bleeding. In fact, the curriculum of many doctors was not unfairly summed up in the effective words of one of them:—

Is people sick, they comes to me,  
I purges, bleeds and sweats 'em;  
If after that they likes to die,  
What's that to me? I lets 'em.

Blistering was another cherished remedy. 'You must be blistered or you will die,' says her physician to the resolute Duchess of Marlborough. 'I won't be blistered and I won't die,' answers old Sarah, and she kept her word—that time at least.

Further, great benefit was supposed to be derived from eating foods from which the natural man turned in abhorrence. Fine ladies commissioned their footmen to collect snails in the garden before breakfast—the time of day was considered very important—and then to pound the creatures, shells and all, into a horrible mixture, to be consumed with a spoon for the benefit of 'a consumption.'

The one remedy which the faculty rarely advised—partly, no doubt, on account of the difficulties of travelling—was what Horace Walpole called 'a more flannel climate.'

But if the professional cures strike terror unto the heart, what of the quack? That extraordinary love of the secret remedy,

which is as old as human nature and will last as long, was in full vigour two hundred years ago. A bowing acquaintance with the letters and journals of the time must have brought everyone across Bishop Berkeley's tar water and James's powders. They were two of many. The tar water was valiantly pushed by Henry Fielding and (of course) by the Bishop himself. James's powders contained mercury and antimony, and were made up by an old woman who never bothered herself to measure the ingredients. They were called 'fever powders,' but the aristocracy of England took them for every disease impartially. Horace Walpole declared that they could cure 'everything but physicians,' and said he had such faith in them that he should take them if the house was on fire. James himself, in fevers, was caught slyly recommending bark as well as his own nostrum, but no one's belief in it seems to have been shaken in the least, and Oliver Goldsmith, who had himself worked for a medical degree at Leyden and ought to have known better, is believed to have died from an overdose of it.

Another remedy was the drop or pill of Ward, an ex-lackey, which was to cure headache, and most other complaints. It was introduced in 1732 by a Sir Thomas Robinson, who advertised it in a poem:

Say, Knight for learning most renown'd,  
What is this wondrous drop?

(What indeed?)

A volume could be written—a volume was written by Dr. Adair—on the quackeries of that day. But Tickel's *Ætherial Spirit*, Turlington's Drops, Godbold's Balsam (to cure every 'kind and degree of consumption'), Lisbon's Diet Drink, Sir Walter Raleigh's Cordial, Misaubin's Pills, eyesalves for blindness, and plasters for the bite of a mad dog, went on their way rejoicing. People who would have nothing to say to the profession, accepted the quack with quite a touching confidence.

It is not perhaps so much remarkable as worthy of remark that, doctors and medicine being what they then were, the wise men of the time almost universally distrusted them. Swift brought to bear upon them the burning fire of his invective and a fury of scathing contempt, hardly justified by an age which, after all, produced his own friend, the brilliant and courtly physician, wit, and satirist—Arbuthnot.

Smollett, himself a disappointed doctor, abused the profession

in which he had failed in 'Roderick Random'; and in 'Peregrine Pickle' attacked the dishonest toadyism of physicians in general and of that agreeable *bon-vivant*, Garth, in particular.

Horace Walpole's time was pretty equally divided between railing at doctors and doctoring himself. Samuel Richardson, the dapper little bookseller-novelist, attacked them by the mouth of Belton in 'Clarissa,' and loudly scorned their 'daubing and plaistering.'

'A pest on doctors, apothecaries, and all the faculty!' wrote Catherine the Great to Grimm in 1781; but, all the same, it was she who had given the largest medical fee on record—10,000*l.*, 2,000*l.* for travelling expenses, and a life pension of 500*l.*—to Dr. Dimsdale, by whom, on the advice of Voltaire, she was inoculated against smallpox. Voltaire himself declared that he owed his own life in that complaint to 'lemonade and common-sense,' and to ignoring professional advice. He certainly lived to be eighty-four, and to do more work, perhaps, than any man in history on a *régime* contrary in every respect to the medical science of the day. One notable exception to the prevalent mistrust of the faculty was a very powerful exception—the lifelong invalid, Pope. The man who had more to do with doctors than any of his contemporaries wrote of them that he had found among them 'the most amiable companions and the best friends, as well as the most learned men I know.'

It would indeed be a mistake to think that this present century, with all its scientific advance, with its splendid discoveries, and with its honest, humane, and enlightened practitioners, is in a position wholly to despise the eighteenth. An age which produced in our own country Hunter, Jenner, and Abernethy, and abroad Tissot and Tronchin, is at least not contemptible. An age which accepted at the hands of a woman the Eastern remedy of inoculation, cannot have been wholly prejudiced, and illiberal.

Through the old memoirs flits the first dim idea of the contagion of consumption. 'I cannot believe it,' says Horace Walpole; 'were it catching, it would be still more common than it is.' Adair, as has been seen, recommended fresh air as a useful factor in chest diseases; and Cheyne advocated temperance as a means to the preservation of health. To that age belongs the glory of first trying to ventilate the House of Commons—which had apparently been unaired since the days of Edward the

Confessor—and to the last few years of the century the discovery of the cause and cure of scurvy.

But, apart from cures and discoveries altogether, the modern patient has surely something to learn from the patient—who really deserved that name—of the past. The fatalism which stepped straight into disease, and would scarcely move out of its path to avoid the pestilence which walketh in the noonday, was foolish enough; but it was scarcely more foolish than the craven fear of infection and of taking one's necessary risks, which distinguishes many people to-day. Then, everything was attributed directly to the Hand of God; and now, to the drainage. To hear people talk in our time, one might think everyone would be immortal but for the blunder of a local practitioner. The fundamentally false idea that in every illness there always is a cure, if one could only find it out in time, is no doubt beneficial in so far as it leads the patient's friends to leave no stone unturned in their efforts to help him. But though trust in the omnipotence of science is all very well, in the long run one is still flung back, as it were, upon trust in the omnipotence and wisdom of Heaven. Once, the patient was infinitely grateful to his blundering adviser for curing him of, or at least not killing him in, the simplest maladies. But in proportion as doctors have become more trustworthy, patients have become less trusting, and the fine faith which ate the pounded snails and drank the black draughts is—for good or evil—to be found no more.

Of the courage of the sufferers of that epoch there is no kind of doubt. Imagination would turn away sore and sick at the contemplation of tortures endured, and faulty surgery performed before the days of anæsthetics, if it were not that through their sufferings men and women rose to the sublimest heights of heroism and endurance of which our poor nature is capable. Even our own age does not talk more about its maladies, its cures, and its food fads than that one. But grandpapa and grandmama treated the subjects with a kind of rude robustness, much pluckier and wholesomer than our plaintive anxieties.

Though there were always plenty of people 'who are sick by way of amusement, and melancholy to keep up their spirits,' there were far fewer then than there are now. 'Be pleased when you are not sad, and well when you are not ill,' was a counsel much better kept in those stalwart times than it ever has been since.

But if the patients were far from contemptible, so were the

doctors. Despite those blunderings, bleedings and plasterings, and that dreadful zeal to be doing when his strength was to sit still, the old doctor had much to be said for him. What there was to know, he knew. If bad was his best, he did his best; and, as a rule, set up a higher standard of cleanliness and temperate living than his patients ever attained. Call up the picture of the old town physician, with his gold-headed cane with its vinaigrette set in the handle as his sole disinfectant, with his silk stockings, his fine dress, and his full-bottomed wig—‘in my day we should no more have thought of taking a physician without a wig than a phial without a label.’ Remember the long words, the pompous manner, the solemn devotion to precedent and etiquette—but remember, too, the kind old face, the kind old heart, the thousand quiet cases of healing or soothing too often ignored when his follies are scornfully brought up against him, so that of him it may be literally said, ‘the evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones.’ There is no reason to doubt that then, as now, the doctor was generous to a degree unknown in any other profession; unwearied in steady compassion; and where he could no longer bring healing to the body, yet often brought balm to the soul.

Then, surely, as now, he helped man through the darkest places of his physical, and not seldom of his moral life also, and having been his first friend, was also his last.



## *A REVIEW OF THE SESSION*

BY VISCOUNT TURNOUR, M.P.

THOUGH the past Session has been far from lacking in interest, it has derived that interest rather from its effect upon the probable date of the dissolution than from anything in connection with legislative or administrative business. The aliens question had been so exhaustively examined in Parliament, in the Press, and on the platform, and the Bill to deal with it had so nearly passed in the previous Session—indeed would have passed but for Liberal obstruction—that the Aliens Act, which has just received the Royal assent, useful and important measure though it is, lost much of its debating value.

The discussion on it was both wearying and unprofitable, except indeed to the Unionist party, who gained enormously from the opportunity it afforded for displaying in the clearest fashion the extraordinary want of discipline, cohesion, and leadership in the ranks of the Opposition, a state of affairs which time and Unionist reverses alike seem unable to heal. I have been told by old Parliamentary authorities that in the whole course of their experience they never remember a party throwing away their chances as the Liberals have done this Session over the Aliens Bill.

Here was a Bill opposition to which would entail the most stupendous 'explaining-away' before every working-class audience in the country by Liberal speakers in the coming fight. On the other hand, its support from the Liberal Benches would certainly not have tended to improve the position of the Government; for it would have meant time for a fuller and a freer discussion on the Unemployed Bill, and the Redistribution Proposals, subjects which are not popular with all sections of the Conservative party. These facts were thoroughly realised by a number of Liberals inside the House, and most certainly by the London Liberal members and candidates, who addressed a strong appeal to their party, feebly supported as it seems by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, begging that the Bill might be allowed

to go through. The appeal was totally disregarded and the most strenuous opposition offered by practically the whole of the Liberal members unconnected with London; and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, unable to resist the temptation, abandoned all pretence of supporting the Bill, and voted against the third reading. When one examines the reasons for the Opposition attitude, they are very hard to analyse. Assuming that the Liberals were anxious at all costs to prevent the Government from obtaining the *kudos* for a measure for which it was notorious that the working class in the large towns affected by alien labour would be grateful and appreciative, one can only marvel at the extraordinary feebleness of the methods of attack. If they were honestly opposed to the provisions of the Bill, I can only say that their arguments were extremely unconvincing and unreal. And if they were in favour of the principle, but opposed to the drafting of the measure, then one is lost in surprise at the small use they made of the conciliatory methods of the Home Secretary.

The sorrows of the Scotch Churches aroused little or no general public interest, while the other successful Government measure, the Unemployed Bill, after many vicissitudes and after being whittled down into a practically non-contentious form, was very quickly disposed of. Notwithstanding, however, the highly modified shape in which the Bill has become law, it is in many ways a measure of first-class importance, and in my judgment it is unfortunate that more time was not possible for discussing it, and the undoubted precedent it creates. Assuredly, the power of organisation, to which I shall refer later, made itself felt in connection with this measure. The Redistribution Proposals, had their details ever reached the debating stage, would have furnished the House and the country with some of the most exciting scenes ever witnessed at Westminster, but fate doomed otherwise; they appeared one day only to vanish a few afternoons later with melodramatic effect. The Agricultural Rating Act Continuance Bill is noteworthy in view of the very slight resistance which it incurred, when we remember the tremendous opposition offered to the original measure when it was passed in 1896.

This exhausts the list of Government achievements, apart from the annual Bills, and takes us to debates on Adjournment Resolutions, Votes of Censure and the like; among these it is difficult to find any single one which assisted in the smallest degree the general good of the Empire or the individual. Rambling

quibbles and forced indignation characterised them all alike. The Fiscal debates were perhaps the driest and dullest of the lot, and each party seemed by mutual consent to be keeping its best weapons for the platform: indeed, the Fiscal question illustrates with peculiar vividness the increasing substitution of Press and platform for the Houses of Parliament, as a means of discussing a great national question. The Session produced a useful little crop of private measures that obtained the Royal assent, the 'Weighing of Minerals in Coal Mines Bill,' the 'Compensation for Damages to Crops Bill,' and the 'Shipowners' Negligence Bill.'

The administrative doings of the House were neither very exciting nor very instructive, though one or two individual debates, notably those on Post Office Estimates and the Volunteer Vote, were perhaps rather more electrical than was altogether relished by the Government Whips. There was very little contentious matter in the Budget Proposals, and the debate was chiefly kept up by the indefatigable Mr. Lough and other hardened statisticians. Truth to tell, the interest of the House seemed centred during the Session on the morbid question of its own dissolution, and on any incidents which tended to affect that question. Thus, we saw a packed House of Commons listening to the MacDonnell debate, while the Prime Minister's declaration after the defeat on the Irish Estimates was made in the presence of the largest House which has assembled during the whole course of the present Parliament. Outside and inside the House, in season and out of season, 'Will the Government get through the Session?' and 'What will the other side do if they get in?' were the only two questions which seemed to trouble people, and as neither of them could be satisfactorily answered by mortal man their constant repetition was apt to pall.

Apart from this shadow of dissolution, the Session has been remarkable for the triumph of organisation. I do not propose to touch here on that triumph of organisation, as evinced by the force of party discipline, which has enabled the Government to weather the more than usually stormy seas and sudden squalls of the past Parliamentary months. This is naturally a delicate subject for a Unionist member to tackle. I mean rather the ever-growing power of electoral organisation, and its virtual triumph, even though shorn of substantial advantage, in the Acts that have just been added to the Statute Book. Thirty or forty years ago, I imagine (I speak under correction), a candidate

fighting a constituency confined himself to appealing to the electors as a fit and proper person to represent them; as a firm upholder of his party's foreign and domestic policy, whatever that party was; and as an opponent or advocate of any particular scheme or programme that might be before the country. He was not called on, as a candidate is now, to receive a deputation of the Associated Union of Street Sweepers (to take a purely fictitious name) and to explain his views on the substitution of machinery for manual labour in street cleaning, in order that the association might determine whether they should support or oppose him. Nor was he called on by the 'National League to retain the Ancient and Modern Hymn Book' (to take an equally fictitious name) with a veiled threat to the effect that if he did not take all the means in his power to stop the movement, permitted by the Church but abhorrent to the society, for making use of hymns and tunes other than those in the 'Ancient and Modern Hymn Book,' the league would send down its Parliamentary agents to work against him, and would organise its local members to vote solidly for his opponent. Consequently a member, 'in the brave days of old,' went to the House of Commons prepared loyally to support his party in all party matters, and to vote as he pleased, in accordance with his honest convictions, on all non-party questions. Nowadays a member goes to the House so committed by promises made to various leagues, unions, and associations at the time of his election, that not only is a severe strain put upon his party loyalty at times, but also upon his honesty and impartiality. He knows that, when any question which nearly concerns some powerful organisation is going to be brought up in the House, he will receive two or three strongly worded, often insolent memorials, directing him how to vote; and that he will find a crowd of delegates and agents of the association collected in the inner lobby, who will almost prevent him from entering the House in their eagerness to keep him in the straight path.

This growth and abuse of organisation have been foretold by political writers for a long time past, and notably by the late Mr. Bagehot, in his well-known preface to his 'Lectures on the Constitution,' in which he foreshadows the coming of the time when the votes of every class and calling, especially the lower ones, shall be so consolidated that Members of Parliament will be bound to carry out their exact orders, and when each member will become a mere machine.

During the past Session we have been furnished with two very striking illustrations of the power of organisation by the Trades' Disputes Bill and by the debate on the Post Office Estimates. The latter has called most attention to the subject, but the former is just as instructive. However much one may agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the undesirability of many thousands of postal employees, who possess votes, demanding with one accord an increase of pay from the Government who employ them, yet at least these postal employées had a grievance in the disregard of the findings of the Bradford Commission; nor did they go to the lengths of agitation pursued by trade unionists over the Trades' Disputes Bill. On the day of the debate on the latter, a Bill for which members had been already systematically canvassed, the outer and inner lobby, as well as the Strangers' Gallery, were crowded by trades union delegates, who, with the aid of their Parliamentary representatives, so effectually 'picketed' the House that a large proportion of members actually *dared* not vote against it.

The whole question of organisation appears to me to merit serious consideration, not by the House of Commons—for we are powerless, or nearly so, to effect any change—but by the mass of the electors, who ought to remember that in forming associations to bring pressure, and often most unfair pressure, on members or candidates to take this or that line of action, they are, in reality, not so much protecting their supposed interests as using their voting power as a means of blackmail. It may be urged that, if it were not for political associations or organisations, no one of us would have entered the House of Commons. That is undoubtedly the case, but party political organisations merely endeavour to persuade a number of electors to vote for a particular policy or a particular candidate. Their persuasion must be peaceful persuasion pure and simple, for they have no penalties to enforce on those who incur their displeasure by refusing to agree with them. It is a very different thing from an electoral organisation, consisting of a number of voters bound together for a certain object, often a very trivial object, who, in order that their purpose may be carried out, threaten a candidate that, if he does not agree with them in connection with their particular 'fancy,' they will use their total voting strength against him. It is a matter of common knowledge that we are unbusinesslike now. We shall be more so in the future if this system continues.

I fear I have strayed somewhat outside the 'original question,' to use a Parliamentary expression, but there really remains little more to speak of in a general review of the past Session, which is all this article pretends to be. To sum up one's general impression, it has been a Session overshadowed by the dissolution; a Session in which neither side have particularly distinguished themselves by hard fighting and hitting, but rather by vexatious wrangling over minor points; a Session in which that now famous disease, 'the malaria of ambiguity,' has been painfully apparent; and a Session in which outside pressure and organisation have made themselves strongly felt. Finally, it has been a Session which will be little regretted by either side, and will, I should think, be always regarded as an ugly nightmare by that devoted little band, the Government Whips, who, notwithstanding the inroads made on their numbers by promotion and accidents, have stuck doggedly to their posts, and kept the flag flying.

*FROM A COLLEGE WINDOW.*

## V.

## CONVERSATION.

I CANNOT help wishing sometimes that English people had more theories about conversation. Really good talk is one of the greatest pleasures there is, and yet how rarely one comes across it! There are a good many people among my acquaintance who on occasions are capable of talking well. But what they seem to lack is initiative and deliberate purpose. If people would only look upon conversation in a more serious light, much would be gained. I do not of course mean, Heaven forbid! that people should try to converse seriously; that results in the worst kind of dreariness, in feeling, as Stevenson said, that one has the brain of a sheep and the eyes of a boiled codfish. But I mean that the more seriously one takes an amusement, the more amusing it becomes. What I wish is that people would apply the same sort of seriousness to talk that they apply to golf and bridge; that they should desire to improve their game, brood over their mistakes, try to do better. Why is it that so many people would think it priggish and effeminate to try to improve their talk, and yet think it manly and rational to try to shoot better? Of course it must be done with a natural zest and enjoyment, or it is useless. What a ghastly picture one gets of the old-fashioned talkers and wits, committing a number of subjects to memory, turning over a commonplace book for apposite anecdotes and jests, adding dates to those selected that they may not tell the same story again too soon, learning up a list of epigrams, stuck in a shaving-glass, when they are dressing for dinner, and then sallying forth primed to bursting with conversation! It is all very well to know beforehand the kind of line you would wish to take, but spontaneity is a necessary ingredient of talk, and to make up one's mind to get certain stories in, is to deprive talk of its fortuitous charm. When two celebrated talkers of the kind that I have described used to meet, the talk was nothing but a brisk interchange of anecdotes. There is a story of Macaulay and some other great conversationalist getting into the swing at



breakfast when staying, I think, with Lord Lansdowne. They drew their chairs to the fire, the rest of the company formed a circle round them, and listened meekly to the dialogue until luncheon. What an appalling picture! One sympathises with Carlyle on the occasion when he was asked to dinner to meet a great talker, who poured forth a continuous flow of jest and anecdote until the meal was far advanced. Then came a lull; Carlyle laid down his knife and fork, and looking round with the famous 'crucified' expression on his face, said in a voice of agonised entreaty, 'For God's sake take me away, and put me in a room by myself, and give me a pipe of tobacco!' He felt, as I have felt on such occasions, an imperative need of silence and recollection and repose. Indeed, as he said on another occasion of one of Coleridge's harangues, 'to sit still and be pumped into is never an exhilarating process.'

That species of talker is, however, practically extinct; though indeed I have met men whose idea of talk was a string of anecdotes, and who employed the reluctant intervals of silence imposed upon them by the desperate attempt of fellow-guests to join in the fun, in arranging the points of their next anecdote.

What seems to me so odd about a talker of that kind is the lack of any sense of justice about their talk. They presumably enjoy the exercise of speech, and it seems to me strange that it should not occur to them that others may like it too, and that they should not concede a certain opportunity to others to have their say, if only in the interests of fair play. It is as though a gourmet's satisfaction in a good dinner were not complete unless he could prevent everyone else from partaking of the food before them.

What is really most needed in social gatherings is a kind of moderator of the talk, an informal president. Many people, as I have said, are quite capable of talking interestingly, if they get a lead. The perfect moderator should have a large stock of subjects of general interest. He should, so to speak, kick-off. And then he should either feel or at least artfully simulate an interest in other people's point of view. He should ask questions, reply to arguments, encourage, elicit expressions of opinion. He should not desire to steer his own course, but follow the line that the talk happens to take. If he aims at the reputation of being a good talker, he will win a far higher fame by pursuing this course, for it is a lamentable fact that, in a lively talk, one is apt to remember far better what one has oneself contributed to the discussion than what other people have said; and if

you can send guests away from a gathering feeling that they have talked well, they will be disposed in that genial mood to concede conversational merit to the other participators. A naïve and simple-minded friend of my own once cast an extraordinary light on the subject by saying to me, the day after an agreeable symposium at my own house, 'We had a very pleasant evening with you yesterday. I was in great form'!

The only two kinds of talker that I find tiresome are the talker of paradoxes and the egotist. A few paradoxes are all very well; they are stimulating and gently provocative. But one gets tired of a string of them; they become little more than a sort of fence erected round a man's mind; one despairs of ever knowing what a paradoxical talker really thinks. Half the charm of good talk consists in the glimpses and peeps one gets into the stuff of a man's thoughts; and it is wearisome to feel that a talker is for ever tossing subjects on his horns, perpetually trying to say the unexpected, the startling thing. In the best talk of all, a glade suddenly opens up, like the glades in the Alpine forests through which they bring the timber down to the valley; one sees a long green vista, all bathed in shimmering sunshine, with the dark head of a mountain at the top. So in the best talk one has a sudden sight of something high, sweet, serious, austere.

The other kind of talk that I find very disagreeable is the talk of a full-fledged egotist, who converses without reference to his hearers, and brings out what is in his mind. One gets interesting things in this way from time to time; but the essence, as I have said, of good talk is that one should have provoking and stimulating peeps into other minds, not that one should be compelled to gaze and stare into them. I have a friend, or rather an acquaintance, whose talk is just as if he opened a trap-door into his mind: you look into a dark place where something flows, stream or sewer; sometimes it runs clear and brisk, but at other times it seems to be charged with dirt and *débris*; and yet there is no escape; you have to stand and look, to breathe the very odours of the mind, until he chooses to close the door.

The mistake that many earnest and persevering talkers make is to suppose that to be engrossed is the same thing as being engrossing. It is true of conversation as of many other things, that the half is better than the whole. People who are fond of talking ought to beware of being lengthy. How one knows the despair of conversing with a man who is determined to make a clear and

complete statement of everything, and not to let his hearer off anything! Arguments, questions, views, rise in the mind in the course of the harangue, and are swept away by the moving stream. Such talkers suffer from a complacent feeling that their information is correct and complete, and that their deductions are necessarily sound. But it is quite possible to form and hold a strong opinion, and yet to realise that it is after all only one point of view, and that there is probably much to be said on the other side. The unhappiest feature of drifting into a habit of positive and continuous talk is that one has few friends faithful enough to criticise such a habit and tell one the unvarnished truth; if the habit is once confirmed, it becomes almost impossible to break it off. I know of a family conclave that was once summoned in order, if possible, to communicate the fact to one of the circle that he was in danger of becoming a bore; the head of the family was finally deputed to convey the fact as delicately as possible to the erring brother. He did so, with much tender circumlocution. The offender was deeply mortified, but endeavoured to thank his elderly relative for discharging so painful a task. He promised amendment. He sate glum and tongue-tied for several weeks in the midst of cheerful gatherings. Very gradually the old habit prevailed. Within six months he was as tedious as ever; but what is the saddest part of the whole business is that he has never quite forgiven the teller of the unwelcome news, while at the same time he labours under the impression that he has cured himself of the habit.

It is, of course, useless to attempt to make oneself into a brilliant talker, because the qualities needed—humour, quickness, the power of seeing unexpected connections, picturesque phrasing, natural charm, sympathy, readiness, and so forth—are things hardly attainable by effort. But much can be done by perseverance; and it is possible to form a deliberate habit of conversation by determining that however much one may be indisposed to talk, however unpromising one's companions may seem, one will at all events keep up an end. I have known really shy and unready persons who from a sheer sense of duty have made themselves into very tolerable talkers. A friend of my acquaintance confesses that a device she has occasionally employed is to think of subjects in alphabetical order. I could not practise this device myself, because when I had lighted upon, we will say, algebra, archery, and astigmatism, as possible subjects for talk, I should find it impossible to invent any gambit by which they could be successfully introduced.

The only recipe which I would offer to a student of the art is not to be afraid of apparent egotism, but to talk frankly of any subject in which he may be interested, from a personal point of view. An impersonal talker is apt to be a dull dog. There is nothing like a frank expression of personal views to elicit an equally frank expression of divergence or agreement. Neither is it well to despise the day of small things; the weather, railway travelling, symptoms of illness, visits to a dentist, sea-sickness, as representing the universal experiences and interests of humanity, will often serve as *points d'appui*.

Of course there come to all people horrible tongue-tied moments when they can think of nothing to say, and feel like a walrus on an ice-floe, heavy, melancholy, ineffective. Such a catastrophe is almost invariably precipitated in my own case by being told that someone is particularly anxious to be introduced to me. A philosopher of my acquaintance, who was an admirable talker, told me that on a certain occasion, an evening party, his hostess led up a young girl to him, like Iphigenia decked for the sacrifice, and said that Miss — was desirous of meeting him. The world became instantly a blank to him. The enthusiastic damsel stared at him with large admiring eyes. After a period of agonised silence, a remark occurred to him which he felt might have been appropriate if it had been made earlier in the encounter. He rejected it as useless, and after another interval a thought came to him which he saw might have served, if the suspense had not been already so prolonged; this was also put aside; and after a series of belated remarks had occurred to him, each of which seemed to be hopelessly unworthy of the expectation he had excited, the hostess, seeing that things had gone wrong, came, like Artemis, and led Iphigenia away, without the philosopher having had the opportunity of indulging in a single reflection. The experience, he said, was of so appalling a character, that he set to, and invented a remark which he said was applicable to persons of all ages and of either sex, under any circumstances whatever; but, as he would never reveal this precious possession to the most ardent inquirers, the secret, whatever it was, has perished with him.

One of my friends has a perfectly unique gift of conversation. He is a prominent man of affairs, a perfect mine of political secrets. He is a ready talker, and has the art, both in a *tête-à-tête* as well as in a mixed company, of mentioning things which are extremely interesting, and appear to be hopelessly indiscreet. He generally

accompanies his relation of these incidents with a request that the subject may not be mentioned outside. The result is that everyone who is brought into contact with him feels that he is selected by the great man because of some happy gift of temperament, trustworthiness or discretion, or even on grounds of personal importance, to be the recipient of this signal mark of confidence. On one occasion I endeavoured, after one of these conversations, not for the sake of betraying him, but in the interests of a diary which I keep, to formulate in precise and permanent terms some of this interesting intelligence. To my intense surprise and disappointment I found myself entirely unable to recollect, much less to express, any of his statements. They had melted in the mind, like some delicate confection, and left behind them nothing but a faint aroma of interest and pleasure.

This would be a dangerous example to imitate, because it requires a very subtle species of art to select incidents and episodes which should both gratify the hearers, and which at the same time it should be impossible to hand on. Most people who attempted such a task would sink into being miserable blabbers of *tacenda*, mere sieves through which matters of secret importance would granulate into the hands of ardent journalists. But at once to stimulate and gratify curiosity, and to give a quiet circle the sense of being admitted to the inmost *penetralia* of affairs, is a triumph of conversational art.

Dr. Johnson used to say that he loved to stretch his legs and have his talk out; and the fact remains that the best conversation one gets is the conversation that one does not scheme for, and even on occasions from which one has expected but little. The talks that remain in my mind as of pre-eminent interest are long leisurely *tête-à-tête* talks, oftenest perhaps of all in the course of a walk, when exercise sends the blood coursing through the brain, when a pleasant countryside tunes the spirit to a serene harmony of mood, and when the mind, stimulated into a joyful readiness by association with some quiet, just and perceptive companion, visits its dusty warehouse, and turns over its fantastic stores. Then is the time to penetrate into the inmost labyrinths of a subject, to indulge in pleasing discursiveness, as the fancy leads one, and yet to return again and again with renewed relish to the central theme. Such talks as these, with no overshadowing anxiety upon the mind, held on breezy uplands or in pleasant country lanes, make the moments, indeed, to which the mind, in the sad mood which

remembers the days that are gone, turns with that sorrowful desolation of which Dante speaks, as to a treasure lightly spent and ungratefully regarded. How such hours rise up before the mind ! Even now as I write I think of such a scene, when I walked with a friend, long dead, on the broad yellow sands beside a western sea. I can recall the sharp hiss of the shoreward wind, the wholesome savours of the brine, the brisk clap of small waves, the sand-dunes behind the shore, pricked with green tufts of grass, the ships moving slowly on the sea's rim, and the shadowy headland to which we hardly seemed to draw more near, while we spoke of all that was in our hearts, and all that we meant to do and be. That day was a great gift from God ; and yet, as I received it, I did not know how fair a jewel of memory it would be. I like to think that there are many such jewels of recollection clasped close in the heart's casket, even in the minds of men and women that I meet, that seem so commonplace to me, so interesting to themselves !

It is strange, in reflecting about the memorable talks I have held with different people, to find that I remember best the talks that I have had with men, rather than with women. There is a kind of simple openness, an equal comradeship in talks with men, which I find it difficult to attain in the case of women. I suppose that some unsuspected mystery of sex creeps in, and that with women there is a whole range of experiences and emotions that one does not share, so that there is an invisible and intangible barrier erected between the two minds. I feel, too, in talking with women that I am met with almost too much sympathy and tact, so that one falls into an egotistical mood. It is difficult, too, I find, to be as frank in talking with women as with men ; because I think that women tend more than men to hold a preconceived idea of one's character and tastes ; and it is difficult to talk simply and naturally to anyone who has formed a mental picture of one, especially if one is aware that it is not correct. But men are slower to form impressions, and thus talk is more experimental ; moreover, in talking with men, one encounters more opposition, and opposition puts one more on one's mettle.

Thus a *tête-à-tête* with a man of similar tastes, who is just and yet sympathetic, critical yet appreciative, whose point of view just differs enough to make it possible for him to throw sidelights on a subject, and to illumine aspects of it that were unperceived and neglected—this is a high intellectual pleasure, a potion to be delicately sipped at leisure.



But after all it is impossible to say what makes a conversationalist. There are people who seem to possess every qualification for conversing except the power to converse. The two absolutely essential things are, in the first place, a certain charm of mind and even manner, which is a purely instinctive gift; and, in the second place, real sympathy with, real interest in the deuteragonist.

People can be useful talkers, even interesting talkers, without these gifts. One may like to hear what a man of vigorous mind may have to say on a subject that he knows well, even if he is unsympathetic. But then one listens in a receptive frame of mind, as though one were prepared to attend a lecture. There are plenty of useful talkers at a University, men whom it is a pleasure to meet occasionally, men with whom one tries, so to speak, a variety of conversational flies, and who will give one fine sport when they are fairly hooked. But though a University is a place where one ought to expect to find abundance of the best talk, the want of leisure among the present generation of Dons is a serious bar to interesting talk. By the evening the majority of Dons are apt to be tired. They have been hard at work most of the day, and they look upon the sociable evening hours as a time to be given up to what the Scotch call 'daffing'; that is to say, a sort of nimble interchange of humorous or interesting gossip; a man who pursues a subject intently is apt to be thought a bore. I think that the middle-aged Don is apt to be less interesting than either the elderly or the youthful Don. The middle-aged Don is, like all successful professional men, full to the brim of affairs. He has little time for general reading. He lectures, he attends meetings, his table is covered with papers, and his leisure hours are full of interviews. But the younger Don is generally less occupied and more enthusiastic; and best of all is the elderly Don, who is beginning to take things more easily, has a knowledge of men, a philosophy and a good-humoured tolerance which makes him more accessible. He is not in a hurry, he is not pre-occupied. He studies the daily papers with deliberation, and he has just enough duties to make him feel wholesomely busy. His ambitions are things of the past, and he is gratified by attention and deference.

I suppose the same is the case, in a certain degree, all the world over. But the truth about conversation is that, to make anything of it, people must realise it as a definite mental occupation, and not merely a dribbling into words of casual thoughts. To do it well



implies a certain deliberate intention, a certain unselfishness, a certain zest. The difficulty is that it demands a catholicity of interests, a full mind. Yet it does not do to have a subject on the brain, and to introduce it into all companies. The pity is that conversation is not more recognised as a definite accomplishment. People who care about the success of social gatherings are apt to invite an instrumentalist or a singer, or a man with what may be called parlour tricks; but few people are equally careful to plant out two or three conversationalists among their parties, or to take care that their conversationalists are provided with a sympathetic background.

For the fact remains that conversation is a real art, and depends like all other arts upon congenial circumstances and suitable surroundings. People are too apt to believe that, because they have interests in their minds and can put those interests into words, they are equipped for the pretty and delicate game of talk. But a rare admixture of qualities is needed, and a subtle conversational effect, a sudden fancy, that throws a charming or a bizarre light on a subject, a power of pleasing metaphorical expression, the communication of an imaginative interest to a familiar topic—all these things are of the nature of instinctive art. I have heard well-informed and sensible people talk of a subject in a way that made me feel that I desired never to hear it mentioned again; but I have heard, on the other hand, people talk of matters which I had believed to be worn threadbare by use, and yet communicate a rich colour, a fragrant sentiment to them, which made me feel that I had never thought adequately on the topic before. One should be careful, I think, to express to such persons one's appreciation and admiration of their gifts, for the art is so rare that we ought to welcome it when we find it; and, like all arts, it depends to a great extent for its sustenance on the avowed gratitude of those who enjoy it. It is on these subtle half-toned glimpses of personality and difference that most of our happy impressions of life depend; and no one can afford wilfully to neglect sources of innocent joy, or to lose opportunities of pleasure through a stupid or brutal contempt for the slender resources out of which these gentle effects are produced.

## *THE KING'S REVOKE.<sup>1</sup>*

BY MRS. MARGARET L. WOODS.

### CHAPTER XXI.

WHEN the Prince de Benevente's carriage had rolled over the bridge of Tours in the direction of Mon Repos, it had passed a hired chaise coming in the opposite direction and containing the Marquesa de Santa Coloma and her maid. Luz, although concerned at first to find herself exiled from the presence of her King, had, in fact, greatly enjoyed her visit to Mon Repos. To be thrown into the companionship of a girl of her own age, so sympathetic, and at the same time so superior to herself in talents and education as Caroline, had been at once an agreeable and an enlightening experience. Her enthusiastic friendship for Caroline Gérard overcame her prejudice against the French nation, though it could not affect her devotion to her King. Madame Gérard had treated her with a kind of severe benevolence; because, although the Marquesa's benighted opinions, religious and political, might be rather her misfortune than her fault, they could not be overlooked.

Talleyrand had forgotten that he had left orders for the Marquesa de Santa Coloma to return to Valençay on the same day as himself. When her fair face at the window of the chaise caught his eye, he sent a footman running after it, to bid her await him in an hour's time at the Hôtel St. Julien. This in nowise interfered with Luz's plan, which was to have a last interview with Patrick before returning to Valençay.

But as she had never in her life walked abroad unattended, she took with her her maid—a Frenchwoman—and left her, as usual, with the carriage in the courtyard of the Maison Prudhomme. Now the maid was neither young nor pretty; but this did not prevent her from being happy in the conviction of her own attractiveness to the other sex. She was, therefore, little surprised, and not at all perplexed, when a man having the air of a gentleman peeped out of a window in the wing of the house, and, ascertaining that the coast was clear, kissed his hand to her. A few minutes

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1905, by Mrs. Margaret L. Woods, in the United States of America.

later the lock of a side-door grated, and the same man, with a challenging smile and his finger on his lip, whisked into the carriage beside her and drew down the blind on the side next the courtyard.

The Baron de Ferriet was supposed by his British employers to be in Westphalia, sent there for no particular reason except that d'Haguerty had insisted on his removal before beginning operations at Tours. But a good son naturally desires from time to time to see an aged mother, and there were quite a number of uninhabited rooms in the same wing with the English club. It had pained him to find that his sister-in-law, having lately deposited quite a substantial sum in a bank, the whereabouts of which he had not been able to discover, was apparently short of ready money. For, as usual, he had had villainous luck at cards, and, *noblesse oblige*, a gentleman cannot cheat. He was annoyed, too, that there should be no English lodgers in the house, although the Baronne believed that the foreign merchant and his daughter paid more than Henriette pretended. He had found out nothing particular about them, for those English servants were always uncommunicative with him. Business compelled him to leave for Paris that day, after a dismal week spent in hiding at Tours, where he had obtained nothing beyond his travelling expenses. It was only an idle curiosity which led him to invade the privacy of the waiting-maid in the hired chaise. For the second time he had seen an extremely beautiful young lady alight at the Maison Prudhomme, and remain some little while there. His sister-in-law seemed to know nothing more than that she was a foreign lady staying with Madame Gérard, and that she came to the Bernsteins' about the resetting of an old diamond necklace.

He soon learnt from the maid the name of the lady, her age, the age of her husband, the positions and dispositions of her brothers; also that she was staying at Valençay. That 'ce pauvre Prince Espagnol qui n'a pas le sou' was in love with her, besides the Prince de Benevente, who was not young and lame, certainly, but rich, very rich, and a man of wit. He wondered at himself for having taken the trouble to flirt with so unattractive a woman in order to hear this trivial gossip. But one never knows. Just as he was about to leave the carriage and its occupant a large travelling carriage, loaded with baggage, rolled into the courtyard. He watched it from behind the blind. This was probably the Antwerp diamond merchant returning from Paris. Sam came forward to

help him down. He was a big, unwieldy, white-haired man, apparently rheumatic. Having slowly climbed the shallow curving steps to the great door, he turned to say something about the luggage, showing a red face with bushy white eyebrows. Now, where had M. de Ferriet seen the man before? He could not remember. The big man spoke. The voice had in it a familiar ring. The spy had keen and practised powers of observation, but it was only in the night watches, rolling in a diligence on the Paris road, as he saw imaged upon the dark the figure of the Antwerp merchant, blurred in its details, that with a start he put to it the name of d'Haguerty. Could it be he? If so, something important was in train at Tours, and he, de Ferriet, had been got out of the way—was then suspected by his British employers.

Now the Count, unconscious of the eyes which had rested on him, plumed himself on having hit the lucky moment for his arrival. De Ferriet, who should have been in Westphalia, was in Tours, so Sam hastened to inform him. A disquieting circumstance, yet explained by his habit, well known to the servants, of periodically drawing on his sister-in-law's purse. At any rate, he was leaving in a few hours, before he would have an opportunity—it appeared—of recognising d'Haguerty or of spying on the repairs of his carriage. At another point his return from Paris seemed precisely opportune, as he was just in time to have a talk with the Marquesa before her return to Valençay. Yet even here he was a few minutes too late.

But while the Count was rolling through the barrier of the town, and counting the hours which must divide him from La Suedoise, with whom he had fallen in love as he had not fallen in love for a quarter of a century, his two young allies, Patrick and Luz, were discussing his character.

'Of course he is not a gentleman,' said Luz. 'What do you expect? It is not to be thought of that a man of birth would become a paid agent.'

'He is a first-rate actor, and very ingenious,' replied Patrick; 'but the British Government has, I believe, cleverer agents; only there are very few they can trust not to play a double game. D'Haguerty is an honest man in his way, and it is even a part of his honesty to be so anxious to sell your diamonds. He thinks me unfair to his employers in keeping them back.'

'But why, indeed, should you do so?' cried Luz. 'They were given in order that they might be sold.'

'They were given to the King, Luzita. They have served him, first, in testifying to our good faith with the British Government, which has supplied us with ample funds without disposing of them. My desire now is—surely your own desire must be—that the King himself should receive these diamonds of the Villartas, these jewels once meant for the Virgin of the Carmen. Let him with his own royal hands present them to the English Ministers, and they, if they will, accept them from him. But it is my belief that they will hand them back to him with a bow, and that these diamonds of yours will be the means of providing our King with money, of which he will stand in even greater need when he reaches Spain than he does now.'

'That is clear. You are quite right as usual, Patrick. You must take great care of the necklace, and not allow the Count to get it.'

'He is capable of stealing it from us, Luzita, in the interest of his Government. It would make me easier to be without it. That was the reason I asked you to have your jewel-case brought up. Now let us open it, and do you take the real diamonds until the King leaves Valençay, when you shall yourself hand them over to him. Meantime I will take the false ones. If the police should seize me before my job is done, the loss will be the less. The Count would be seriously angry if he knew of the exchange; but let him discover it if he can.'

'Jesu and Maria!' cried Luz, laughing, 'under such excellent teachers as my brother Diego and yourself I am becoming such a clever woman I shall soon not be a Christian at all. And the proof of this, Patricio, was my invention for getting rid of Diego while we carry out our mission.'

'If you have really done that, Luzita, you are an angel,' returned Patrick, helping her to unfasten the jewel-case. 'I myself could not think of any means except assassination.'

'Oh, Patrick! And my own brother!' cried Luzita, quite shocked. 'But in truth, if my duty to the King did not come before everything, I should be very wrong in distrusting one of my own family so much as I do. Yet how can I trust him? Alas! I see how false he is in his behaviour even to me. Sometimes he treats me with the most cruel contempt—'

'Dio Santo! What a beast!'

'Sometimes with the most flattering affection. But perhaps I am very unkind, for since I have been at Tours he has written me

several letters, telling me everything about our poor King, and how very melancholy he is. It is plain Diego does not know the reason, for he actually says— Well, never mind what he says. Of course our poor King must wonder why he hears nothing more from you ; besides, he is still terribly short of money.'

'Then the sooner Diego visits Paris to find out what San Carlos is doing about the King's money, the better we shall all be pleased. But, Luzita, how if he refuses to go ?'

Luz threw up her head with an air which made Patrick smile.

'I shall see that the Prince de Benevente insists upon his going.'

It was plain she was beginning to taste the sovereignty of beauty, that sovereignty as to which the Abbé, now about to be hoist with his own petard, had been so careful to instruct her.

The jewel-case was open, but Patrick had his head out of the window, watching d'Haguerty arrive. He turned to announce him.

'A fortunate chance ! But let us make haste with our exchange. Ah ! where is the clasp ? As usual, the wretched thing—' fumbling for the diamond necklace ; 'it is tangled up in heaven knows what. How it is more women do not commit suicide I shall always wonder since I have had to get in and out of their clothes every day. For God's sake help me, Luzita.'

He seated himself in a chair, and Luz, with some laughter, first at his clumsiness, and then at her own, unfastened the gauze and lace about his throat and disentangled the necklace.

It was certainly not displeasing to Patrick to be thus ministered to by so much beauty ; yet the white hands and arms about his neck did not enrapture him so much as Henriette de Ferriet to her own torment imagined, as she obtained a partial view of the Marquesa's back and conceived the lovely Spaniard to be embracing her own Prince Charming. The little book-room had its spyhole on the side of the Bernsteins' salon, as well as on the other ; but Madame de Ferriet had never before made use of it to spy upon Patrick. These spyholes had been the Baron's invention, and at his instigation she had used them once, to but too much purpose. Alone in the night the recollection of the treachery of which she had been guilty towards her confiding lodgers would come to her like a hot iron branding her flesh. It was a treachery that had brought her in that considerable sum of money, the whereabouts of which the Baron was so eager to discover. He had begun to

reproach her now with her idleness, her want of zeal in the service of the French Government and the de Ferriet family. But in the absence of old Bernstein he had seen nothing in the daughter to arouse his suspicions, and on her new lodgers she was determined that she would not be a spy ; unless, indeed, the spy of love. For as the carriage of the Marquesa continued stationed in the courtyard, and its mistress in colloquy with the reputed Mademoiselle Bernstein, the torment of her jealousy became intolerable. She stole into the book-room, and at first only listened to the conversation between the Marquesa and Patrick, of which she could not understand a word, as it was carried on in Spanish. There was no suggestion of sentiment in the tone of either voice ; but there was more than a suggestion of an intimacy, hardly to be looked for between a great lady and a tradesman's daughter. It was at an unfortunate moment that Madame de Ferriet, succumbing to temptation, put her eye to the hole in the wall. While she was still looking the Count came in, and she heard the Marquesa greet him in French.

'You come just at the right moment, Count. Behold all the conspirators assembled ! What message have you for the King of Spain ?'

But since the Count had been put on his guard by certain details of Patrick's adventure with the would-be robber of Madame de Ferriet, he had determined never to forget the existence of that small adjoining room. Accordingly, he laid his finger on his lip before he replied :

'I beg of you to tell the Prince of the Asturias that I have been quite unable to raise him a loan in the quarter he mentioned. But before you go, Madame la Marquise,' he continued, winking, 'let me show you the setting of some stones which I have deposited in the little room yonder, for safety during my absence, as my daughter is sometimes a little careless.'

Madame de Ferriet had left the door into the *salon* half open. Even so she had but just time to vanish from the book-room, and, well oiled as were lock and hinges, she dared not actually close the door behind her. Quick as lightning she reached the chair at her bureau, and began entering in her account-book any figures that came to her pen. D'Haguerty, peeping in, saw her seated there.

'My child, my child !' cried the Count in his most hortatory Bernstein voice, 'here is a door, not even latched !' The inner



bolts were then drawn. 'I trust no one has found out where I concealed the jewels.'

In vain that evening did Henriette de Ferriet light the lamp and prepare the fragrant coffee. No Prince Charming appeared through the door which seemed now almost sacred to him. Only Mademoiselle Bernstein looked in from the passage, to excuse him on the score of business. Not that the pretended father and daughter spent the whole evening together.

The Count, perceiving at length some possible advantage in tobacco, proposed to smoke a pipe with Sam in the kitchen. But before he went Erskine Charlesworth came in. D'Haguerty asked him whether he brought bad news, for certainly he had not the air of a man on whom fortune smiled. Relieved upon that point, the Count and Patrick, after the manner of their sex, paid no further attention to Charlesworth's aspect, but proceeded to discuss the horses which he had contrived to pass through the English stables, and the smugglers' arrangements for the relays. The smugglers were accustomed to keep ponies for their own use in cellars under farmhouses and among the ruins of châteaux and humbler homes, with which the Revolution, and above all the wars of the Royalists and the Blues, had strewn the country in Brittany and La Vendée. Once across the Loire the Spanish princes, the Count, Patrick Dillon, and Charlesworth could take horse and ride with all speed to the coast of Brittany. But it was proposed that the carriage with the hiding-place contrived within it should drive after them as fast as it might along the high-road, to provide a refuge in case of mischance or the inability of the Infantes to ride so great a distance. The carriage was to have been empty, but the Marquesa had now proposed to make it less suspect by going in it to visit the Gérards at Loheac.

'The Marquesa,' observed Patrick, 'actually suffers pangs of conscience at the notion of playing a trick on that old devil of a Talleyrand.'

'I did myself,' returned Charlesworth, 'until it occurred to me that nothing would delight him so much as to get rid of the Spanish princes and have Valençay to himself again. I only regret we cannot further oblige him by removing Don Antonio.'

'Talking about consciences,' commented Patrick, 'are you yet prepared to give up your parole?'

Charlesworth coloured slightly.

'We are making good progress,' he replied. 'That is, the

General makes considerable progress in jealousy. I've played—Heaven forgive me!—a trump card in the shape of an invitation which Madame Gérard gave me not long ago to visit her in Brittany. Accordingly, la Générale presses me to join her at Chenonceaux, where she has been allowed a suite of rooms for the summer. She is certain that fear of Madame Gérard's anger alone prevents me from accepting the invitation. Yes—I am becoming a consummate *fat* and minor rascal.'

'I see my advice and assistance have not been entirely thrown away upon you, Mr. Charlesworth,' said d'Haguerty, looking with tempered approval at the new clothes which Charlesworth had got at the Count's importunity, and disapproval at his haggard countenance; 'and if you have persuaded Madame la Générale that your death's head appearance is caused by your devouring passion for her, why, it may even prove an advantage to you. Although, it's my own experience that the ladies like a robust man, a man of fine presence—' the Count swelled his chest—'and one who can offer them plenty of lively persiflage, besides the tender sentiments the dear creatures naturally expect.'

Here the Count sighed and momentarily fell into a dream: a little circumstance which his comrades might usefully have noted. Instead of which they abandoned themselves to the boredom which d'Haguerty's frequent lectures on himself and the ladies inspired, until Charlesworth said curtly:

'Well, I must be off. But I shall be here to-morrow, Count, at your orders, and I will give up my parole whenever you think it is time to move.'

Accordingly, a few days later, when Charlesworth appeared at the Maison Prudhomme with the usual grammar-books under his arm, the Count beamed upon him.

'I have arranged the affair of your parole, *mon ami*, with the greatest ease. There is nothing now left for you to do but to write your letter to *ce bon Général*.'

'I am curious to know what you said,' observed Charlesworth.

The Count only smiled cunningly. He had, indeed, imposed on the General with a romance which did credit to his imagination. The circumstance of Charlesworth's attempted suicide was inevitably known to the Governor through his secret agents, and d'Haguerty explained it to have been the result of an unfortunate passion for Madame Gaspard. This picture of a great and repressed passion, a determined suicide, had the advantage of corresponding

with the General's notion of the British character. Further, the Count represented Charlesworth as profoundly respectful in his attitude both towards the General and towards the institution of marriage: 'like all the other English, for example,' said the Count. Torn between these sentiments of respect and his love for Madame Gaspard, the young man feared that unless some external force restrained him he would be unable to resist the temptation to visit her at Chenonceaux. Pretty women are all fond of admiration, the Count observed, and the *ennui* of a sojourn in the country frequently undermines the severest feminine virtue. He had urged the young professor, he said, to give up his parole, a step which would naturally lead to his being confined to the town of Tours and placed under the supervision of a gendarme. The Count did not add that the gendarmes, always well acquainted with the gossip of the town, would have no difficulty in accounting for the fact of M. Charles having fallen under the Governor's displeasure. Indeed, it required all his vaunted diplomacy to keep his young friend from being sent to join Featherston at Bitcher, where the luckless heir of Upperdale was now immured.

'I suspect, Count,' observed Charlesworth, 'you have made me out a stronger case than I could have done for myself. I have now only to write the letter giving up my parole, and establish an understanding with my gendarme about my visits to the stables.'

'Yes; and yet'—the Count shrugged his shoulders—'who knows? Perhaps it is you, after all, who will have the use of Sam's fine carriage.'

'How? Do you think the Spanish princes can safely——'

The Count spoke impatiently, but low, leaning forward in his chair:

'Look you here, Charlesworth. I don't believe the Spanish princes will ever get into that carriage at all. It's an infernally annoying thing, when I've arranged the whole business in a way to add lustre to a reputation which, though I'm a modest man, I'll dare to say is equal to that of any diplomatist in Europe in the same line as myself. I shall be blown upon, sir, shall be damaged in my profession, and by no fault of my own.'

'What do you mean, Count?'

'I mean, I've a notion that Dillon's precious Ferdinand VII. is a mean-spirited rascal, sir. He's afraid of Bonaparte; he licks the hand that's turned the key upon him. And it struck me, when I broached the matter of the escape to him, that he was frightened

—frightened for his skin ; though Lord knows why he should be, for it would be you and me and Dillon that would be shot, my boy, if we were caught, and not the King of Spain. And it's glad I am to be speaking out plainly to you, instead of eternally manœuvring round the sentiments of an enthusiast like poor Dillon, who's ready to run me through if I breathe a word of my just suspicions.'

Now, as neither d'Haguerty nor Patrick had been able to see the King since the meeting in the quarry, it appeared to Charlesworth that the Count could have no grounds for taking a sterner view of Ferdinand than he had seemed then to take. Everyone, at any rate everyone who had been within the circle at Valençay, knew that the Royal fly was constantly endeavouring to soften the heart of the Imperial spider.

But the Count had been in touch with Valençay, if he had not again got inside the castle. Amongst others of its inhabitants, he had had some confidential talks with Pedro Collado, the King's valet and confidant.

The Imperial police, like the police of other despotisms, while intolerably harrying the average citizen, had quite failed to master the band of agents and passive confederates of the Royalists which existed throughout France, very active, but not particularly dangerous. Certainly Charlesworth had been surprised that even in the depths of Berri, not far from Valençay, d'Haguerty had been able to count on the secret hospitality of a château, empty except for the Intendant. Here he had more than once conferred with Collado. The valet had received no communication from his Royal master respecting the project of escape ; unless the kicks with which he had been rewarded for conveying the Count's first missive can be called so.

He had made up his mind then to accept any other which might come from the same quarter, together with a handsome donation, but on no account to deliver it. This partly to avoid probable kicks, partly because, on reflection, he had decided that the escape of the King and Don Carlos would be to the disadvantage of him, Pedro Collado. The old Infante, Don Antonio, would be left, and would surely retain his favourite Perrico. Of what use to be the favourite of a mere Don Antonio ? Yet Collado did not betray his master's would-be friends ; he merely burnt the Count's letter to the King, and left his further inquiries without reply.

## CHAPTER XXII.

'Look, Pascual,' cried the King. 'No! Nearer! You cannot see the fish from there.'

Pascual Villarta's pale face went a shade paler; the vestige of a frown was visible upon his blond brow. If the King wanted to push him into the stream, of course he would have to fall; in it was the duty of a loyal gentleman of Spain to sacrifice both comfort and dignity to the pleasure of his sovereign. They stood by the miniature stream in the miniature valley below the castle of Valençay, and the sweet hay scented the meadows. Beside the peasant haymakers, men in blue smocks and women in short petticoats with coloured handkerchiefs over their heads, there were children and young ladies, scattering it with wooden forks or piling it over each other with cries and laughter. The dull green of the cut grass was mixed with the faded whites and blues of wild parsley and scabious, and the foliage of the hanging wood through which the paths led down from the castle to the meadows was fuller and darker than it had been when the King had met the Count and Patrick Dillon in the quarry. The sky was pale and bare in the sunlight, except for one little cloud like a downy feather that hung there alone, hardly substantial enough to shine against the blue.

But if the stream was bright and clear at the top to-day, it was still muddy at the bottom. Splash! Pascual was tumbled in, not quite head over ears, but deep enough to be amusing. The row of haymakers paused, rake in hand, to grin, and some boys throwing hay at each other laughed noisily. The King laughed loudest of all at the success of his trick, which appeared to him vastly humorous.

'Ha, ha, Pascual! you can't think how funny you look. Man! you're as green as an old carp, but not nearly as cheerful. Go and change your clothes quick, before the Princess sees you, or she won't be in love with you any longer.'

Having stood thus a minute contemplating his victim, hand on hip, his glossy black head bare in the sun, his white teeth shining in a grin as broad as that of any haymaker in the row, Ferdinand turned away and hastened up a gravel path towards a bench above, where he had left the Marquesa de Santa Coloma. He soon saw her sitting there in the transparent shade of the sunlit greenery. In her wide straw hat, tied under the chin with a green ribbon,

and her clinging dress and scarf of the same faint-hued green, she looked strangely pale, and also strangely beautiful, with the beauty of some woodland spirit.

Ferdinand drew near, exulting in the trick by which he had defeated the policy or the fatality of interruption which seemed to pursue his *tête-à-têtes* with the lovely Marquesa. The Abbé, indeed, was more than obliging, but Pascual had shown a singular want of tact. The Princess de Benevente, too, who at one time had seemed positively pleased that his fair countrywoman should console the princely captive, now, if her indolence prevented her from herself watching over Luz, would send the broken-down Countess she called her lady-in-waiting to act as duenna.

The Marquesa rose respectfully on the King's approach. He was still merry in the recollection of the practical joke he had played on Pascual; but he did not tell Luz, because she was fond of her brother and fussy about his health. All he said was, taking her by the arm :

'Come, Marquesita, let us sit here and enjoy ourselves. I am to send away your amusing brother to please you, so you must forgive me if just for a few minutes I have got rid of your dull one to please myself.'

He seated himself close beside her and kept his hand on her arm.

'Luzita! You are not angry because I want to be alone with you?'

The full brown eyes looked languishingly in her face, and Luz blushed, looked down, was strangely and profoundly confused. Then, recalling the importance of her mission, she made an effort and said :

'No, your Majesty. I am—am glad.'

'You are glad? Enchantress! if you knew how you said that. Truly, truly, Luzita, you are glad?'

He reached his other hand across and grasped hers. Then Luz was frightened of the King, and also, perhaps, frightened of something in her own bosom. Had he been an ordinary man she would have started away; but it was the King. So she sat perfectly still, and only went on speaking hurriedly, her eyes fixed on the ground—speaking of Patrick Dillon and d'Haguerty and the plan for the King's escape. He, his hands still on hers, listened, or seemed to listen, and said at last in a low, urgent voice :

'And you? You will fly with me?'

'I shall have the honour to accompany your Majesty as far as Tours,' faltered Luz; 'but see! here comes one of the Princess's pages.'

With a muttered objurgation Ferdinand withdrew his hands and began scratching figures in the dust with his cane. A young gentleman was hurrying down the alley towards them, one of the bedizened youths whom the Princess kept about her in imitation of the Bonaparte royalties. The Princess had sent him to fetch the Marquesa, whom the Prince wished to see at once in his own library. The emissary seemed to have orders not to return empty away, for, in spite of the basilisk look fixed upon him from under the King's black satiny eyebrows, he waited to shepherd the Marquesa to the Castle.

She reached the library, and found the Prince occupying his favourite sofa behind his writing-table.

The Abbé, sleek and well-groomed as usual, sat apparently at ease in an elbow chair, but with a look about his red under lip and blue chin suggestive of obstinacy.

'A chair for Madame la Marquise here by the table.'

The page placed it as the Prince directed and withdrew.

'Madame, I find your brother, far from feeling gratitude for the letters of introduction I have prepared for him, is most unwilling to go to Paris.'

'Certainly I am, Prince. I was sent here to exercise an influence over the Prince of the Asturias, as well as over my own brother. To incline Don Ferdinand to give further and more public proofs of his acquiescence in the rule of King Joseph. I do not say I have yet succeeded, but I am in a fair way to do so; and now, at the caprice of'—he paused and swallowed something—'my sister, a charming child, but scarcely more, I am to be sent away to Paris. That I should enjoy myself in Paris goes without saying, but I have my duty to consider.'

The Marquesa's indignation at the perfidy of her brother towards King and Usurper alike swept away her fear of him.

'You are being sent to Paris by—by Don Ferdinand, brother, and not by me,' she said, sitting bolt upright.

The Abbé laughed sarcastically and shrugged his shoulders.

'But why, Marquise, should you wish to send your brother away?' asked the Prince, with a fine air of bewilderment. 'Tell me, Abbé, why?'

Luzita blushed, a bright rose colour, which the Prince did not



fail to appreciate, cast down her eyes, and remained perfectly silent.

The Abbé shrugged his shoulders again in seeming embarrassment.

‘Really, Prince, it is a delicate question to answer; but even a brother must be aware that the Marquesa is more than pretty. She is here without her husband, and it is surely my duty, as a Churchman and a brother, to protect her from temptation and scandal. Such services are not always appreciated by giddy young women.’

‘Brother!’ ejaculated Luz.

‘Yes, my dear child,’ cried the Abbé, with a slightly threatening accent; ‘if you will not consent to be guided by me you will live to regret it.’

Luz started and trembled with indignation. How exactly the reverse of the truth was this explanation of her brother’s.

Talleyrand read her astonishment as well as her anger on her transparent countenance, and hastily turning, as it were, the leaves of his memory, he perceived indications that the Abbé’s conduct with regard to Don Ferdinand and his sister had not been what he pretended.

Now, since the little Imperial comedy of his compelled marriage, Talleyrand had believed himself cured of all taste for gallantry. But the singular beauty of Luz Santa Coloma, her air at once of good breeding and of the most unworldly innocence—these were qualities to wing and sharpen the last shaft which the weary Cupid of such a man may always be hiding in his seemingly empty quiver. The Prince, however, had no illusions about the feelings such a love would inspire in the Marquesa. But while he could not aspire to fill a place which he was cynically sure must be filled before long—that of lover to the young beauty—he was determined that a creature he despised so heartily as Ferdinand of Spain should not fill it under his very eyes. Smiling superficially he turned an expressionless regard upon the Abbé.

‘Reassure yourself, Abbé. The Princess and myself will watch over this fair *étourdie*. My own idea is that the Prince of the Asturias has real need of a friend in Paris. My introductions and the fact that you are as high in the favour of King Joseph as in that of our unfortunate guest should make you particularly useful.’

‘My Prince, you are too complimentary to my poor——’

'Not at all, not at all'—the Prince's reptile gaze became glassier. I myself should feel it a relief if our princely guests were left less entirely penniless. Go, dear sir, as soon as possible. A travelling carriage shall await you to-morrow—at ten o'clock, shall we say?'

Talleyrand could not but admire the Abbé's self-control and dissimulation. A certain patchiness in his complexion alone betrayed his fury as, uttering a banal acceptance, he bowed himself from the room. But the Prince detained his sister.

'Tell me, dear Marquise,' he said, taking her hand, 'is not the real truth that your brother, far from protecting you, exposes you to danger?'

Luz coloured and the tears filled her eyes.

'Pray, Highness, do not question me.'

'I will not, but I am glad to think I have been able to serve you. Power has sometimes its pleasures, Luzita, although, alas! it leaves the heart very lonely.'

The Prince sighed and pressed her hand.

'Dear Prince,' replied Luzita, returning the pressure, 'you are much more kind to me than I deserve'; and she too sighed, conscience-stricken at the thought of her own treachery. 'You are so noble, so kind; you remind me of my dear Don Alonzo, my excellent husband, the Marqués de Santa Coloma.'

And, grimly smiling at his own expense, Talleyrand loosed her hand.

But the Abbé was not yet gone.

When the carriage stood in the courtyard before the door, the men cording his baggage behind it, the King came out of his apartments, alone and bareheaded. He took Diego's arm and paced the long, open portico which ran beneath the closed gallery. He was silent and preoccupied. At length, as the Abbé's man waited, holding the carriage door for him, the King stopped in his pacing and turned towards his companion.

'Abbé,' he said, 'supposing the British Government should offer to find me a means of escape, would it be your opinion that I should accept their offer?'

The Abbé raised his eyebrows.

'I wonder that your Majesty, who possesses such an admirable judgment of your own, should trouble to ask me the question.'

He stooped and kissed the King's hand, saying in a loud voice: 'Adieu, your Highness. May Jesus, Maria, St Joseph, and St. Ildefonso have your Highness in their keeping!'

The King caught him by the sleeve.

'But you have not answered my question. What do you say?'

The Abbé paused a moment, then, looking full at the King, uttered a low emphatic 'No; a thousand times, no!'

He took off his hat in a deep bow and stepped hastily into the carriage.

Thus was the reluctant Abbé removed from the path of the conspirators by the diplomacy of his despised little sister. But meantime their affairs were much less advanced than they supposed. Not only had Collado abstained from delivering their missives to the King, but a finer and more powerful hand than his was blocking the remaining channel by which they were attempting to reach Ferdinand. Talleyrand had given orders to the Marquesa de Santa Coloma's maid to bring to him any missives which might seek to pass between that white dove among women and the black bird of prey that fluttered clipped wings about her. And half a dozen little folds addressed to Luz he held in the flame of a taper, smiling cruelly to himself as they turned to black ashes and fluttered down upon the hearthstone. Also three addressed to the Prince of the Asturias he treated similarly, but with a sigh and a regret that honour forbade him from reading what that fair hand had written to the fortunate or—as he trusted—unfortunate young man.

By the Prince's arrangement a stricter surveillance than ever prevented any private talk between the two young people. To the King the project of flight receded further and further into the background. He spent hours smoking Havanas and recalling the least look or intonation of Luzita's, to magnify it in recollection into an expression of love. He hypnotised himself into the belief that his passion was returned. Yet, why did she not answer his appeals? At least they did not appear to have offended her.

The Marquesa meantime had almost forgotten the little uneasiness the King's manner had caused her when they were sitting together on the bench in the park. Her thoughts were concentrated on his approaching flight. Every day, every night, her anxiety, her sense at once of helplessness and responsibility, became more poignant. All was ready; nothing remained to be done but to inform the King, to put him in touch with his rescuers. It appeared so easy; as easy as it seems to a strayed butterfly to reach the outer air through the clean pane of a closed window. Like the butterfly, she beat herself against an invisible obstacle. She wrote three times to the King and received no reply. Mademoiselle

Bernstein came to stay with the Intendant at the neighbouring castle, and visited Valençay, but failed to see the King, or even Collado. In three days the Prince and Princess de Benevente were leaving the Castle, and she had received a polite intimation that she must leave it before them. She had given her French maid notice and asked the Prince's permission for Mademoiselle Bernstein, whose travelling carriage the Marquesa wished to share as far as Tours, to spend a night at Valençay. She easily got the permission, but how to convey to the King that the critical moment was at hand? She had grown to suspect her own maid and the King's attendants.

The chapel was on the first floor, at the end of a gallery which ran the length of the castle. The Marquesa occupied rooms at the back of it, communicating with it by a side-door. The King made it a matter of strict etiquette that the Governor, the Prince and Princess de Benevente, and all visitors of quality—Mademoiselle Bernstein did not count as such—should attend Vespers and exhibit a devout behaviour. The obnoxious Commandant Henri was no longer there, to be tormented body and soul by enforced devotions, but Ferdinand and his brother still found a certain amusement in the spectacle of the Prince's boredom, the Princess's jerking lapses into sleep and painfully open-eyed recoveries, and the Governor's gallant struggles to rise from his knees without assistance. The building was so small that there was not room for the household, except the Spaniards in attendance on the King and the Infantes. A *prie-dieu* chair was reserved for Ferdinand, and his prayer-book lay upon it. On taking it up and opening it at the Office, he saw a small piece of paper, folded like a paper match or a marker, lying inside it. Stealthily, when all heads were bowed, he smoothed it open, and read, written in his own tongue and in a fine feminine hand: 'Come to the chapel at one o'clock to-night and open the side-door.' He had to read it several times before he could quite believe his senses. But there it was; yes, at last the answer to those passionate appeals of his had come, and how complete, how unexpected. His first impulse was to leap to his feet with an exclamation of triumph. But, plunging his face into his hands till only the high crest of raven hair nodded visible above their blanched delicacy, he poured forth a silent rapture of thanksgiving and vows to every saint he conceived likely to have interested himself in the happiness of the royal and Most Catholic heart.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

THE Prince de Benevente, who in his country home disliked to wear the air of a preoccupied statesman, transacted most of his public business early in the morning or late at night. So it happened at one o'clock on this particular night he was walking up and down his own library, while meditating the terms of a letter he was dictating to the French Ambassador at Vienna. His young secretary sat with suspended pen at the writing-table, in the strong light and shade of the green-shaded lamp. Suddenly a look of listening came into the secretary's face, and at the same moment Talleyrand paused in his pacing; for there was a very slight but unmistakable noise in the gallery without, as though a person walking along it in the dark had knocked up against a piece of furniture which stood along the wall just opposite the Prince's door. Talleyrand, pausing, said nothing, and again both listened. But whoever passed along the gallery went soft-footed as a ghost. Slowly and quite noiselessly the Prince opened his door and looked out, and he saw the door of the chapel, where a red lamp was always burning, opened as noiselessly. He saw against the red light a black, youthful figure, crowned by a high crest of black hair. It passed within, and there followed close behind it, with steps as muffled, another figure with a powdered queue and a glint of gold lace on the shoulder. The Prince de Benevente quietly closed his door. There was a long pause. At length the secretary said:

'The last words I have written, Highness, were: "The Emperor would be strongly averse——"'

Talleyrand walked to the fireplace and looked at the clock.

'*Tiens!* It is only one o'clock! I thought it was much later. I don't know why I am so sleepy this evening, but I can't keep upright. I think I had better go to bed now, and we will begin again at half-past eight to-morrow morning.'

The secretary hesitated.

'Shall I look round, Highness, to see there is no one about the castle?'

'There is no one; it was the Princess's dog. It has gone to find the Countess's room, no doubt.' So the secretary went to bed.

In spite of the impatience with which the King had been counting the minutes between half-past ten and one o'clock, the voice of

his natural suspiciousness had at moments made itself heard. The note had been written in Spanish certainly, but he did not know the Marquesa's writing, and there was a chance that the thing might be a trick. There might be hidden doors, secret dungeons, in this old castle, into which a man might be lured at midnight and never seen again, except, perhaps, as a white-haired shadow, shrinking from the light of day. He knew if he consulted his brother that Don Carlos would at once implore him not to risk his person on such an adventure; but then Don Carlos was not in love. Pedro Collado was a sturdy child of the mountains, ostensibly, at least, devoted to his master, and no coward. Accordingly, it was in company with Collado that the King stole, in heelless slippers of green morocco, up the grand staircase and along the gallery, the manservant following in stockinged feet, and doing his best to emulate the feline sureness and lightness of his master's movements. But it was Collado who had knocked against the bit of furniture opposite Talleyrand's door. He remained in the chapel while the King pushed open the door indicated to him and disappeared.

Ferdinand found himself in a small lobby, which would have been dark but for a veiled light proceeding from a room, the door of which had been left half-open. It seemed to be a lady's dressing-room. It was empty, but by the light of the *veilleuse* he recognised a fan and a scarf lying upon a table; for did he not know by heart the least detail of Luzita's attire? Having recognised them, he closed the door behind him and advanced boldly. Immediately he was on the threshold of another and much larger room, lighted by wax candles. It was a bedroom, yet it resembled rather a drawing-room, in which had been placed for ornament a fine canopied bed a hundred years old and hung with a brocade of yellow silk and silver. But the King saw nothing except Luz Santa Coloma.

Not far from the door was a straight sofa, on which she had been seated, painfully upright, her eyes on the slow-moving hands of a clock on a neighbouring writing-table. Luzita was prone to siestas and unused to late hours, so that sleep had suddenly overcome her, and she had drooped sideways against the high end of the sofa and its yellow damask cushions. Only the lovely curve of a fair cheek was visible. Her face was hidden in the fold of one white arm, while the other, long and girlishly slight, hung slackly down by her side. There had been a dinner of ceremony, and she still wore her white silk evening dress. Her auburn hair,

swept up from the nape, where it wandered in tendrils of a more golden colour, was intertwined with a string of pearls. On her neck a small gold clasp helped to define where a single row of pearls gleamed dimly, drowned, as it were, in the milky whiteness of nape and shoulders. Some might have stood long to look upon the sleeping girl, but Ferdinand flung himself down at once beside her on the sofa and set a kiss full on her bare shoulder. Luz sat up, started to her feet, and, hardly awake, bewildered and frightened, called out in a voice not loud but poignant :

‘Patricio !’

And from behind the stately bulk of the bed stepped hurriedly forth Mademoiselle Bernstein.

Patrick, stretched on a long chair, had been, like an old campaigner, laying in ‘proviand’ of sleep, in preparation for the nights he hoped to spend speeding his King towards freedom and Spain. He had slept sound since midnight, but the instant his name was called he sprang mechanically to his feet, as wide awake as though he had never closed his eyes. The accent of alarm in Luzita’s cry made him fearful of some mischance ; but, seeing only Ferdinand : ‘Thanks to Maria and all the saints, it is the King !’ he cried, his hand upon his heart. ‘Your Majesty is not followed ?’

The King, taken aback by this strange interruption to his proposed *tête-à-tête*, stared haughtily at the intruder, whom he did not recognise ; then, turning to the Marquesa, said shortly :

‘Is this your maid ? Send her away. I don’t want her.’

Luz was recovering her faculties, but in doubt whether that was not a dream-kiss which had startled her from dreams. Surely it must have been.

‘Your Majesty does not, perhaps, remember,’ she replied, a little intimidated by the royal tone. ‘This is Captain Dillon.’

A dark flush rose to Ferdinand’s cheek, and he suddenly scratched his forehead, a gesture which Perrico would have recognised as ominous. He was already annoyed, and a fierce rush of jealousy now swelled his wrath.

‘Dio Santo ! So it is, of course ! How could I forget ? What a ridiculous figure !’

And he cast a look of impatient scorn on the disguised officer, whose appearance as a young woman, if too robust to satisfy the fashionable ideas of beauty, might still have been envied by very many of the sex he simulated. The young man coloured hotly.



'It pains me,' he said, 'that my disguise displeases your Majesty, but it is a necessity. I hope soon to salute my King at the head of his troops, and to show him I can play a man's part better than a woman's.'

'*Caracoles*, my friend! You can certainly brag as well as all the rest of my officers, and that is very well indeed.'

Ferdinand began walking the room in an irritated manner.

His officer, from red, became pale. He paused and compressed his lips, and then :

'Suffice it I am a loyal and faithful servant of the King. I come to tell your Majesty that the Count d'Haguerty and myself have successfully carried out the plans of which you are informed——'

'*Qué demonio!*' cried Ferdinand. 'Can't you tell me all about it to-morrow morning?'

Luz exclaimed, in dismay :

'But your Majesty forgets. To-morrow I shall be gone.'

'I do not forget that, Marquesa.'

'But your Majesty forgets that it is in my carriage that you and the Infante Don Carlos are to escape.'

The King paused and reflected with bent head. Then he addressed Patrick petulantly :

'Go away and take off that dress! How can I have confidence in a creature neither man nor woman? Have you no man's dress in your baggage?'

'I have, your Majesty, but for reasons——'

'Go and put it on, then! I have seen you look like a woman; I have seen you look like a vagabond; let me see if you can indeed look like an officer and a gentleman.'

Humiliated, anxious—for the King seemed hardly to grasp the necessity for haste or for caution—yet not venturing to resist his command, Patrick left the room, and the King closed the door sharply behind him.

The Marquesa was dismayed and shocked, in spite of her loyalty, by the conduct of Ferdinand, whom she had never before seen without his mask of exquisite amiability. Her mood, exalted, bent only on the consummation of the long-prepared plan of escape, was not one to lay her open to the seductions of a lover, even though that lover were her King. Had Talleyrand permitted Ferdinand the opportunity of laying siege to the fair loyalist's heart by regular advances, he might have proved irresistible; but time and circumstance now drove him to attempt the sudden

storming of a heart as yet scarcely touched by any emotion warmer than that of loyalty.

He took her by the hand and made her sit down beside him on the sofa from which she had risen. Still clasping her slim hand in one of his own, he rested his other hand on the couch behind her and leaned upon it, looking in her face with great brilliant black eyes, at once bold and languishing. His big nose appeared to grow bigger, his Austrian lips more prominent, while the high crest of raven hair standing up, disordered, upon his head seemed almost alive with the working of the tempestuous brain beneath. He seemed some swarthy spirit of evil, bent on the destruction of a blonde, unwinged seraph.

'Marquesa,' he said, in a curt, harsh voice, strangely different from the mellifluous utterances she was accustomed to hear from his lips, 'you have practised upon your King an insolent deception.'

'I, your Majesty?'

'Yes, you. Do not affect to be ignorant that I love you madly. From the first moment I saw your angel face I have loved you as I have never loved any other woman. For days and nights together I have neither eaten nor slept for thinking of your enchanting beauty. It is a madness—a madness, I tell you, my love for you, Luzita! You have made no answer to my passionate appeals; yet I felt sure you loved me—I knew it. But some horrible fatality has always prevented me from speaking to you alone. I could not even say farewell to you without witnesses. It was death, it was hell to me, Luzita; and this evening in the chapel—your note. I come here, and what do I find? You have brought this man here to laugh at me.'

'Heaven forbid!' cried Luzita. 'But no; your Majesty must be aware why Patricio Dillon is here.'

'I will know what this Dillon is to you, Luzita.'

'A friend, assuredly a friend.'

The King smiled scornfully.

'Friendship between a man and a beautiful woman! The truth, if you please, *niña mia*.'

'I have known him since we were both children, and your Majesty must know that we are here, fellow-conspirators in a loyal conspiracy to set our King at liberty. Oh, for God's sake! I implore your Majesty to remember that it is to-night, this very night, you must escape.'

‘Child, you expect me suddenly, and without preparation, to go on this mad adventure? Dio Santo! I have heard nothing of your conspiracy or your conspirators for weeks.’

‘That is not our fault, your Majesty. The Princess de Benevente told me only this evening that the Prince, hearing that I had dismissed my French maid, wished me to know that certain notes which should have passed between your Majesty and myself had come into his hands. He wished me to know they had been burnt without being read. The Prince seems to have imagined things—things which were not true.’

The King laughed and swore angrily.

‘The old fox! the old atheist! He is in love with you himself, Luzita, and he was jealous. That is clear. Ah, if you had read my letters you would be less cold to me, cruel Luzita! Tell me, *niña mía*, what was in yours. Confess you put into them a little of your heart.’

But in all the King said, somehow, nothing seemed to Luz of importance, except the terrible indifference he was showing to the chance of liberty she offered him. Rapidly yet patiently she repeated to him the contents of her notes, which had described in detail what had been done in preparation for his flight and when and how he must be prepared to make it. She added that the carriage was now there, and the two secret agents in charge of it spending the night beside it, on the alert. The stables being within the castle court, there was no sentry in a position to prevent the King and his brother from slipping out of a certain window—their apartments were on the ground floor—and making their way to the stables before daylight. Once within the carriage, unless betrayed, they could not, unless by a miracle, be discovered.

The King, amazed and baffled by this singular form of resistance to his love, which consisted in ignoring it, changed his attitude. He rose from the Marquesa’s side and moved restlessly about, but did not interrupt her while she was speaking. When she had finished her explanations there was a pause. Then, pale, closing his eyes, which were bright with tears, he said in a lamentable voice:

‘I cannot go without you, Luzita, and I cannot be left here without you—no, indeed I cannot.’

She responded eagerly:

‘And it is I who shall have the honour to take your Majesty with me as far as Tours.’

'Tours! That is not what I want. Listen, *niña mia*. I will consent to make this dangerous attempt, to do this stupid thing, on one condition. Shall I tell you what that is?'

'I beg of your Majesty——'

'That you come with me, not to Tours, but all the way. If I am caught, and if they spare my life, you must swear to accompany me to my prison. Swear it by our Lady of the Carmen and by the Nails of the Crucifix. And if by a miracle I reach England, you must stay with me there, or how could I live in that infamous country, where they are not even Christians——'

'But your Majesty forgets,' stammered Luz, 'that the Marqués de Santa Coloma, my husband——'

'You put a ridiculous old creature like Santa Coloma, the laughing-stock of the Court ever since I can remember, and a Josefino traitor to boot—you put him before your King? I have heard you say that to love the sovereign is the first of virtues, after the love of God. Luzita, you are killing your King, who loves you with an immense love.'

Ferdinand's voice had risen so much as he spoke that he had not heard a low knocking at the door.

The King's insulting reference to the Marqués de Santa Coloma, on whom the Marquesa looked with affection and gratitude, as well as with wifely loyalty, would alone have roused her indignation. It was also plain to her that the King was yielding to no passing impulse of folly, but was deliberately endeavouring to persuade her to sin against honour and against one of the strictest laws of the Church. She had not yet lived long enough in Madrid to realise with what leniency the Church treated breaches of the Commandments provided the offenders had blood of the right colour or purses of the requisite depth. In the tumult of her feelings she also did not hear the knocking at the door. When slowly it opened she expected to see Patrick Dillon come in. But the young man who advanced in the full light of the wax candles, very pale, but with the proud port of a grandee of Spain, was her brother, Pascual Hermenegildo Villarta. Whatever his emotions, his face gave no indication of them. There was something expressive in its utter expressionlessness, between the haggard face of Ferdinand and that of Luzita, alight with indignation and proud shame. From his countenance you could not have hazarded a guess what business was bringing Pascual Villarta to his sister's bedchamber in the dead hours of the night. Taking no notice of

her, he bowed ceremoniously to the King, and said, in a level voice :

‘Pardon me, but your Majesty would be wise to return immediately to your own apartments. Your Majesty’s absence might be observed.’

Ferdinand drew about him the mantle of his royalty.

‘And by whom ? What conduct is this, Villarta ? You intrude.’

Pascual remained silent, immovable, expressionless, as though the King had not spoken.

‘How did you know his Majesty was here, Pascualito ?’ asked the Marquesa.

Her brother turned his languid eyes her way without turning his head.

‘The King was seen to enter the chapel. There may be persons who will not believe his Majesty is at his devotions.’

The Marquesa changed colour. That the King’s presence in her room at such an hour would destroy her reputation, if discovered, she could not choose but know ; had taken the risk gallantly, given it little consideration. Now the possibility had become an actuality her pride, her delicacy revolted.

‘The King’s enemies,’ she said slowly, ‘must think what they will, but you, Pascual, must believe the truth. It was not for any disgraceful reason that I invited his Majesty to come here to-night. It was because it was necessary to meet a loyal, a devoted servant of his, Patricio Dillon, who has come to Valençay, at the peril of his life, with the object of rescuing the King and the Infante Don Carlos from the hands of their enemies.’

Pascual bowed his head gravely.

‘What you tell me, Maria de Luz, must be the truth ; but a woman of birth owes it to her family to consider her good name before everything in the world.’

‘No, my brother. Nothing is too precious, not even the honour of our family, not even the honour of the Marqu’s de Santa Coloma—nothing—to be sacrificed in the service of our legitimate King.’

The King once more had command of his countenance. It was pale but calm, and he stood in the middle of the room, a regal young figure, at whose feet it seemed not unfitting that gallant youth, beauty, and proud descent should lay the homage of their best.

'These sentiments, Marquesa,' he said, 'are worthy of your noble names—more worthy than the conduct of some others who bear them.'

There was a silence, for Patrick Dillon stood on the threshold, recognisable enough now. Pascual Villarta greeted him slightly, something condescendingly, unconscious of the difference between the man he saw and the boy he remembered. Ferdinand noted, with a fierce leap of jealousy, his handsome young face, his gallant bearing. Patrick, vaguely conscious of a coldness on his King's countenance, dropped on one knee and seemed, with bent head and lips pressed on the royal hand, to implore acceptance of his fervent devotion; then, rising, he glanced round at Pascual.

'The King has told you of our plans?'

'His Majesty has not done me that honour; but I am not come here as a spy. I shall betray nothing, on the word of a Villarta.'

'I trust you, Pascual Hermenegildo.' Patrick spoke gravely; and then, turning to the King: 'I am happy to be able to tell your Majesty that fortune, or rather, I should say, God and Our Lady, have favoured us. Our arrangements are all as perfect as we could wish—far better, indeed, than we could have hoped. The carriage is a marvel of ingenuity. Your Majesty and the Infante Don Carlos may suffer some discomfort in it, but need not fear discovery. We have obtained excellent horses, and they are waiting for us at the regular stations of our friends the smugglers, who on their part are as eager as possible to get all our party safe on board the British fleet. The night is dark, and your Majesty will have no difficulty in crossing the court to the stables, where our agents are expecting you.'

Ferdinand smiled slightly, disdainfully.

'To a mere soldier like yourself, Dillon, doubtless the matter appears quite simple. Has it occurred to you that this is a question of policy, after all?'

'What is a question of policy, your Majesty?'

'Whether I should fly or not.'

'Dio Santo! How can it be a question whether your Majesty should escape from captivity?'

'It is very much a question whether the Emperor Napoleon is not the only person able to seat me again on the throne of my fathers. If I run away to the English I offend him irreparably.'

'Jesu Maria ! But your Majesty said nothing of this to the Count d'Haguerty.'

'It is some time since I saw the British agent. I have thought the matter over since then. I do not believe I should succeed in reaching the British ships alive ; and if I should do so, I do not like putting myself into the hands of the English, who are Constitutionalists, Freemasons, and no Christians.'

Patrick Dillon could not believe his senses.

'No matter what the English are,' he pleaded ; 'they are the allies of Spain, they will put your Majesty at the head of the patriotic armies, and give you back to your country, which desires nothing so much of God and the saints as your Majesty's return.'

'And much good I should do to my country by getting myself shot under a hedge or shut up in a fortress for life, without the least chance of inducing the Emperor to put me on my throne again. Many thanks, señor !'

'Does your Majesty trust to Napoleon,' cried Patrick—'to the most treacherous enemy of Spain and of your Majesty's most sacred person ? Oh, for God's sake, trust in the swords, in the unconquerable hearts of your loyal Spaniards ! Believe me, they lie to you here if they tell you that the French are masters of Spain. Every day they lose ground ; they are driven back, only a little it may be, but still at the sword's point. By the Nails of the Crucifix, if your Majesty were but at the head of his armies he would sweep them across the Pyrenees to-morrow.'

'For an Irishman you are very Spanish, señor Captain,' interrupted the King drily. 'As a general, I do not consider myself equal to a French marshal, to say nothing of Napoleon himself. Nevertheless, I am well content that my Spaniards should continue to buzz round the intrusive King like a swarm of mosquitoes.'

Patrick stared, dumfounded. Was this indeed Ferdinand the Desired ? Luz sat listening, chin on hand and eyes down-cast. Now she rose quickly, and in her turn flung herself on her knees before the King, seizing a hand which in hers did not hang limply, as it had done in the clasp of the young soldier.

'My King, come away ! There is some poison in this place—the poison of lies. Come away ! Be our noble King—the King of noble Spain.'

Ferdinand bent his dark head and spoke very low.

'You know on what condition I will come, Luzita. For your sake I am ready to throw away my crown, even my life.'



She answered aloud :

‘For the sake of your honour, my King. Loyal men have risked their lives to save your Majesty.’

The King shrugged his shoulders.

‘The British Government will pay them,’ he said.

Patrick cried out :

‘No, your Majesty, I am no agent of the British Government ; I am in your Majesty’s own service, and in that of the Central Junta, as my letters have shown.’

The King seemed neither to see nor hear him. He addressed himself to the Marquesa solely.

‘It is in your hands, Luzita. Tell me whether I am to go or stay.’

Patrick turned to her eagerly :

‘But, Luzita, you are surely of opinion that his Majesty should go ?’

‘I pray God that his Majesty may do so,’ replied Luz, who had risen to her feet and stood between the King and Patrick. ‘But the condition he makes is impossible. The King wishes me to accompany him not only to Tours, but all the way—to the ships, to England.’

Patrick was entirely puzzled.

‘I fear that is impossible ; it would be a great risk, great discomfort for his Majesty and the Infante Don Carlos to make the whole journey in your carriage, and a lady could not ride with us.’

‘It does not matter,’ said the King, with unmistakable obstinacy. ‘I will trust myself to the Marquesa de Santa Coloma, and to no one else.’

Patrick was silent a moment, and then :

‘If that is so, your Majesty, I am prepared on our side to accept the additional risk, if the Marquesa——’

He looked at Luz. Pale and trembling, but without hesitation, she answered :

‘No, Patricio ! Can you not understand ? I am willing to sacrifice my life to save the King, but not my honour and the honour of the Marqués de Santa Coloma—no !’

Pascual, with a motion of his head, signified approval.

‘Alas, Luzita !’ said the King in his suavest tone, ‘it is a little late now to change your mind. The castle is already whispering of my presence here, and what will old Santa Coloma think if it comes to his ears that you have an Irish captain attending you,

disguised as your lady's maid? Believe me, he would think little of the rest in comparison. But *caramba*, without any such comparisons, I have yet to learn there is a family in Spain so noble that it deems itself disgraced if one of its daughters wins the love of a Bourbon and her King.'

'Pardon me, Luzita!' cried Patrick, impulsively approaching the Marquesa and kissing her chill hand. Her air was as dignified, almost as cold as that of her brother, but the anguish of her soul was written on her white brow and in the beautiful eyes which she turned upon the young soldier.

'Alas! my friend,' she breathed, 'we have both been mistaken indeed.'

It was not in Ferdinand's heart to understand the nature of the bond, lofty, impersonal, sentimental, which existed between these two. The swift speech and action of the young man, the Marquesa's low response, roused in him a violent passion compounded of two elements—the jealousy of a meridional and the resentment of a thwarted prince.

Collado appeared in the doorway, drawn thither by curiosity.

'Your Highness called?'

His yellow livery was perfect, except for the absence of the buckled shoes. His little sharp eyes glanced round from one to the other, while he held his powdered head straight and square with his shoulders.

The King glared at him for a moment; then, as though struck by an idea, went into the dressing-room and spoke a few words to the lacquey. He returned, and looked with vicious eyes at the Marquesa and Patrick, who were speaking together in tones low, spiritless, and sad. Ferdinand threw himself into a gilded chair, and sat there with a fine haughty grace, as though it had been a throne. The Marquesa, Patrick, even Pascual, felt humiliated under his survey.

'Yes, I was mad, quite mad, for a moment; in danger of committing the greatest folly,' he said, speaking with pauses which no one felt inclined to fill. 'For reasons of your own, Marquesa, you have prevented me from doing so. Good. Now I say to you, Patricio Dillon, go back, and tell my loyal subjects this—even if I could escape from Valençay, I do not choose to be put on the throne by atheists and Constitutionalists, English or Spanish. When I come back it must be as absolute King. Napoleon would make me that. I suppose the señor Captain thinks I ought to be

grateful to him for coming here to rescue me. I am not at all grateful; he is my enemy. Why am I kept a prisoner, without money, surrounded by sentries? Because these irritating attempts to rescue me make the Emperor believe I wish to join his enemies. My whole conduct is bent towards making him understand that I wish to be his friend and ally, and a meddling fellow comes in, without invitation, and undoes all that my diplomacy has effected, even puts my life in danger; for we know what happened to my unfortunate cousin, the Duc d'Enghien.'

At length, raising his head, Patrick spoke in a low but firm voice:

'My King, it is true that I am in myself nothing—young, foolish, of no great family; yet it is Spain that sends me—poor Spain, that can find no wiser, nobler envoy to send; and, believe me, patriotic Spain will accept nothing at the hands of Napoleon. If her legitimate King himself came back as the ally of the French he would be met by faces without joy and hearts without pride. The Revolutionaries, the Freemasons, would then be able to say: "It is we alone who hold high the banner of Spain!" It is not to lead a forlorn hope that your Majesty is implored to return; it is to place yourself at the head of an unconquered nation, which has already fought half its battles and means to fight the other half.'

'That is true,' said Luz emphatically. 'Your Majesty may trust this gentleman.'

'Your friend, Luzita?' commented the King, with a sarcasm she did not apprehend. 'Many thanks; I have wiser counsellors.'

There was again a pause, till Patrick moved, like a man waking from a dream.

'Then, your Majesty, it seems I have nothing further to do except to make my way to the stables and tell my men to go to bed.'

The King hesitated, changed colour, rose from his chair, and seemed about to speak, but remained silent.

In the pause that followed there was heard a pattering of slippered feet outside the door.

*(To be continued.)*

